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TRIBAL VALUES
IN THE BIBLE

Edited by

George M. Soares-Prabhu

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Tribal Values in India

The declaration of 1993 as the year of the indigenous peoples has promoted much thinking about the culture and the social situation of these indigenous peoples of the world. To a surprising extent these peoples (some 300 million of them scattered over 70 countries spread across the surface of the globe) share commonalities of culture and social situation. Their culture which can broadly be described as 'tribal', includes extraordinary values of solidarity with nature, egalitarianism, a non-competitive collaboration with one another, and a filial (not mercantile) relationship with the land, which offer a valuable alternative to the rampant individualism, unchecked greed, aggressive competitiveness, and growing alienation from nature which is leading the post modern world to nuclear and ecological disaster. Their social situation everywhere is one of alienation, oppression and exploitation. Successive invasions of 'outsiders' have driven the *Adivasis* of our land and of the world to the margins of the habitable terrain and even here they are now being threatened by a concerted attack on their habitat by the destruction of forests and the inundation of vast tracts of tribal land through the construction of large dams. The unbridled greed of a non-tribal society threatens the world of the indigenous peoples, and ultimately the planet earth itself.

A recent report of Amnesty International points out how severely the rights of indigenous peoples are being abused. They are among the most oppressed and exploited people on the earth. Indigenous peoples, it is reported, "have been abducted, tortured, killed by hired gunmen for their land or the resources on them, often with the tacit support of state authorities"[1].

In India the extent of such exploitation of tribals is brought home to us strikingly when we remember that:

Every biosphere reserve in the country is on adivasi land. Every major dam since the 1970s has been submerging adivasi land. Every wild life sanctuary in India is on adivasi homelands.

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1. Quoted in Sedfrey Candelania, "The Right to Self Determination. a Legal Persepective". *Asia Link* (May-June 1993) 111.

Every national Park is totally adivasi. Of the mines in India, a majority - 90% - are on adivasi land. Adivasi lands produce most of India's coal, bauxite and mica. Almost 50% of the mineral wealth of India comes from adivasi areas. Yet 85% of the adivasis are below the poverty line. They form 50% of those evicted from their homelands by "National Development Projects". Forming about 8% of India's people, the adivasis predominate in about 20% of the most inhospitable, inaccessible yet perhaps richest tracts of land. Yet only one percent have any legal recognition of their land rights.[2]

It is to redress situations like this that the UN Working Group on indigenous people have produced a Draft Declaration on the Rights of indigenous peoples, the opening paragraph of which reads:

Indigenous peoples have the right to self determination, in accordance with international law by virtue of which they may freely determine their political status and institutions and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. An integral part of this is the right to autonomy and self government.[3]

Alarmed doubtless by this entitlement to autonomy, the Indian government has hastened to announce that there are no indigenous people in India. It argues that "in India hardly any of the tribes exists as a separate society and that they have all been absorbed, in varying degrees, into the wider society of India. The ongoing process of absorption is not recent but dates back to most ancient times"[4]. The tribal peoples of central and North-East India, who make up 7.6 percent of its population, are, it is now said, not adivasis (aboriginal inhabitants) of the land, but `scheduled tribes', an administrative grouping which does not indicate a distinctive, dispossessed people.

It is true that the situation of tribal India is not   quite that of the indigenous peoples of North and South America or Australia, who were probably in the mind of the framers of UN declaration. These, just

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2. Edwin Jaydas, "The Adivasis and Land", in Bosu Mullick, Edwin Jaydas, Anto Akkara & Anita Jaydas, *Indigenous Identity: Crisis and Reawakening.* Delhi. Navin Prakashan Kendra (ISPCK) for Indian confederation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, 1993, 344-45 [3].

3. Quoted in Tapan Bose, "Adivasis Struggle for Liberation". *Asia Link* 16 (May-June 1993) 6.

4. Quoted in S. Bosu Mullick, "Indigenous Peoples of India" in Mullick et alii, *Indigenous Identity* (n. 2 above) 2.

five hundred years ago, were brutally invaded, despoiled of their lands (labelled by high minded jurists *terra nullius*, 'nobody's territory'), enslaved, forced out of their tribal way of life, and decimated by diseases gifted to them by their conquerors, who simultaneously robbed them of the will to live, which might have helped them to withstand these new diseases, which ravaged them. Robbed of their lands and their women by the conquerors and of their gods and their culture by the missionaries who accompanied them, the indigenous peoples were all but wiped out. It is estimated that "50 million Indians perished in Latin America and the Caribbean within 50 years of Columbus' landing. Scholars now reckon that 90 percent of the indigenous population of the Americas was wiped out in a century and a half, the greatest demographic collapse in the history of the planet and the proportional equivalent of nearly half a billion people today".[5] In North America only small dispirited groups of native Americans survive, isolated from 'the American way of life' in underdeveloped reservations. In Australia the aborigines are nearly extinct.

All this happened in India too (thought not, it must be admitted, on the same scale, nor with the same ruthlessness) very much earlier. The tribal peoples of India have survived successive invasions of the country and maintained all through a strong tribal identity, bonds of solidarity, and a sense of pride in their tribal heritage, which refuses to be swallowed up in the murky "mainstream" of Indian life. To suggest that these vital and dynamic communities have been absorbed into the melting pot of Indian society is patently untrue. They are a distinctive group, with a specific primal culture, elements of which are to be found in other tribal societies outside India, [6] and with a social organization very different from the caste system of Hindu India.

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5. Wayne Elwood, "Hidden History: Columbus and the Colonial Legacy", *The New Internationalist*. December 1991, p.6 quoted in Kenith A. David and John C. Boonstra., "Themes to Challenge the Mission of the Church". *International Review of Mission* 81.32 (1992): 581-601 [5811].

6. Robert, Parkin. *The Munda of Central India, an Account of their Social Organization.* Delhi: OUP. 1992.p.12, points out that most of the tribes of central India regardless of language, have systems of affinal alliance (cross cousin marriage) very similar to similar systems existing outside India - in South East Asia, ancient China, Australia, the Amazon Basin and parts of Oceania, some of which bear a very detailed resemblance to what is found in central India. Since these areas are sufficiently isolated to rule out historical contacts, these similarities can only be the result of more fundamental structural properties common to all.

Tribal peoples in India have of course lived so long with Hindu society that the distinction between them is sometimes blurred. But to describe the tribals (as Ghurye does) as "backward Hindus",[7] or dismiss them (as Dumont tries to do) as "only peoples who have lost contact"[8] is a patent exaggeration, the result of their prejudice, or their ideological fixation with the idea that India is politically or sociologically one. I doubt if any anthropologist would accept such extreme positions today. As Parkin writes:

> At the extreme, not even Dumont or Ghurye tried to incorporate the Tibeto-Burman speakers of the north-east into peninsular Indian society: though clearly 'tribals', they could hardly be considered as 'backward Hindus' or 'Hindus who have lost contact'. As Bouez [1985] has pointed out, there are no references to Hinduism in their culture - no Hindu gods, no Brahmans, no pure-impure - and thus they can be compared to tribes outside India. Indeed far from losing contact, they are encountering it only now in some cases, and frequently resisting it with insurrection. *Yet this is but the history of Chotanagpur repeating itself some three centuries later.* Before the Mughal rules began to encroach upon the upland areas in the late eighteenth century there seems to have been relatively little contact between castes and tribes compared to today, when they are thoroughly interspersed. Many of the rulers of this area were of tribal origin, and although they sometimes used Hindu soldiers and gave land to Brahmans, the massive and disruptive take over of the tribal land and the imposition of taxation that impoverished the tribes appear to have been relatively late, associated first, with the Hinduization of the ruling Maharajas of Chotanagpur in the seventeenth century, and then with the imposition of British rule from 1770 onwards. Both these events, but specially the latter, led to an influx of Hindu officials, landlords and soldiers which depressed the tribals economically and politically.[9]

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7. Ghurye, G.S. *The Aborigines - "So Called" - And Their Future.* Poona: Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, 1943., quoted in Parkin (n.6 above) 7.

8. Louis Dumont, "For a Sociology of India", *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (1957) 7-22 [9].

9. Parkin (n.6 above). 11

The tribals of India are therefore an indigenous people or peoples with a marked identity of their own. Their culture with its egalitarian, anti-consumer, nature-friendly values, has a great deal to offer to a world in search of alternative models to the consumer society of the West, and the caste society of India, both of which are heavily destructive of people and of nature. Constituting nearly 15-20 percent of all Christians in India (and an overwhelming majority of the Christians in the North) tribal peoples have much to offer the church in India too. The question raised by Jose Kanannaikal at the National Convention of Catholics in 1989 is still pertinent. "If there is an Indian theology it must be based on the experience of Christian people. If 60-70 percent of the Christians in this country come from the Scheduled caste and the Scheduled Tribe communities, one may again ask: to what extent are the experiences of these people made part of the theological reflection in this country?"[10]

As a small response to the challenge posed here, this issue of *Jeevadhara* would like to reflect on the Bible in the light of tribal life and culture. The Bible is particularly responsive to a tribal interpretation. It is a book steeped in tribal culture. The Old Testament expresses the faith of the tribes of Israel, and remains faithful to its tribal ethos even when its tribal structure was replaced by a monarchy. The teaching of Jesus can be seen as a return to this tribal ethos. Yet dominated as we are by methods of interpretation evolved in post-enlightenment West, we find it difficult to read the Bible with tribal eyes and catch its tribal thrust. This difficulty will, hopefully, be overcome as more scholars from tribal backgrounds begin to interpret the Bible. I had hoped to publish examples of tribal interpretation in this issue. Unfortunately this was not possible given the great constraints biblical scholars in tribal areas are labouring under. One hopes that a future issue of *Jeevadhara* will allow us to hear distinctive voices from the tribal world, that are so important for us today. Till then this issue of *Jeevadhara* written largely by sympathetic 'outsiders' may serve as an initial and very imperfect attempt to open up a new and significant way.

George M. Soares-Prabhu

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10 . Jose Kanannaikal, "Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the Church in India" in *The Catholic Community in India: Towards the Twenty First Century [Report of The National Convention of Catholics, 2-5 June 1989]*. Bombay: 1989, 158-70 [166].

Tribal Religion and Culture

Surface similarities between the cultural traits of tribal and non-tribal groups in India have led some anthropologists to conclude that the tribal peoples are backward Hindus. In fact such similarities are better explained as a borrowing by Hinduism from aboriginal tribal cultures. The tribals of India are indigenous peoples with a coherent and distinctive culture of their own. Their ethos is based on the twin values of anti-greed and anti-pride. Their social organization is egalitarian. Their religion, which finds its most explicit expression in their creation myths, expresses the depths of the tribal experience of life. The article describes and explains the main features of tribal religion and culture as this is found among the tribal peoples of Central India, and shows how they form a coherent integrated whole.

Anthropological studies in India, I suspect, have not yet succeeded in giving a true picture of the tribals. The reason is that most of the studies have been done by non-tribals and quite often with prejudiced minds. This is the reason why even today quite many writers are still busy trying to prove that tribals are backward communities of the dominant Hindu society, their religion and culture being superficial imitations of popular Hinduism, and their languages offshoots of Sanksrit. The question here would be whether such authors will ever begin seeing things from the opposite direction, namely, will they ever accept the fact that tribal elements are the original; so that the roots of modern Indian religions, cultures, languages, political systems etc. are to be found among tribals?

Because the original forms of most non-tribals are to be found among tribals, from the surface level both tribal and non-tribal communities may look quite similar, except in the area of their technical and educational achievements. Perhaps what most obviously distinguishes tribal from non-tribal groups is their size and form. Non-tribal communities tend to be bigger than tribal communities; and non-tribal institutions are more elaborate and complex than tribal institutions which are simple because they still retain their initial (pure) forms. Here the question would be whether these simple pure tribal institutions should ever become like the non-tribal institutions. The answer would be no, because tribals are a race by themselves and

cannot therefore be changed into another race. Another difference that might be mentioned here concerns the historicity of the two types of society. Non-tribals have historical personalities as founders and exponents of everything in them, whereas tribals have no such historical personalities. Their traditions have no historical beginning, they are coming from time immemorial, they are coeval with the origin of humankind itself.

I have been speaking above about similar outward appearances of tribal and non-tribal communities. If we now look at the religion and culture of both kinds of communities, then again we may not at first notice much difference between them. Religions whether tribal or non-tribal are always justifying and supportive systems of their respective cultures; while every culture is the living expression of its particular religion. But here too there is an immediate difference between the tribal and non-tribal situations. It is this: Whereas a non-tribal culture is a ritual expression rather than a lived expression of its particular religious experience, tribal culture is more a life expression (lived expression) than a ritual one. This is the reason why tribal culture includes all the possible aspects of tribal life and does not limit itself to mere rites and rituals, feasts and festivals, songs and dances, and so on. In this sense tribal culture really becomes an applied religion or lived religion. In fact it is here that we come across the real meaning of tribal culture as well. Since from the tribal point of view, only those activities would fall under culture, which have religion as their basis, support and justification, every aspect of their life is supported by religion. From this notional clarification of culture, we also begin noticing the difference between tribal and non-tribal peoples. We have already said that the religious element of non-tribal culture tends to be limited to rituals. This means that their material and secular life is independent of their religion. It is natural, therefore, that they become material and money-centred people, and that even religion becomes not only subordinate but also means to material gains as well. On the other hand tribals, having their religion as the root of every aspect of their life, are religion-centred. Their main concern is living according to God's will, which is understood as being given in their traditions and customs. This is not to suggest that all tribals are necessarily religious people and all non-tribals material and money-centred! What I am trying to do here is merely to indicate the tendencies innate in the two types of culture.

From what we have said so far, it should be clear that at the surface

level tribal elements do not look very different from non-tribal elements. The real differences begin to appear only when we begin to appreciate the religious dimension of all tribal elements and activities. However, my intention in this article is not to study the differences between tribal and non-tribal communities, but to highlight the basic characteristics of tribal life and tribal peoples, so that the readers will have an overall picture of the tribals.

To do this I will begin by giving a general description of the tribals themselves. In the first part of my article I will therefore deal with tribal characters, their socio-economic-political life and also their religious beliefs. While describing various aspects of tribal life, I will point out the religious beliefs that lie behind them; and while describing their religious beliefs, I will point out their impact on day-to-day tribal life. Then in the second part of the article I will try to point out the basic characteristics and possible origins of tribal religion and culture themselves.

Whenever I use the term tribe or tribal in this article I refer to the tribes of Chotanagpur (south Bihar), and though there are no less than fifteen tribes here, I shall be referring only to the five major tribes, namely to the Uraon, Munda, Kharia, Ho and Santal. As for my sources of information, since I am myself a born tribal coming from a very traditional Kharia village and family, I will be using my own personal lived experiences and observations. With regard to other tribes-Uraon, Munda, Ho, Santal etc. - I draw from the experiences of experts in the study of these tribes like Fr. Van Exem for the Mundas; Fr. Agapit Tirkey, Fr. Boniface Tirkey, and Fr. John Lakra for the Uraons; Fr. Bernard Murmu, and Fr. Hans Hendricks for the Santals; and Fr. Denney for the Hos. All of them come regularly to our Institute •
(Regional Theologate of Ranchi) and share their experiences about these tribes with us. Besides, the students from this Institute come from various tribes, and do field work among them. They too have contributed much reliable information about tribes to which they belong. My conviction is that all the tribes concerned will agree with what I will be saying in this article. This article in fact summarizes what I have said more in detail in two other articles of mine, namely, "Tribal Culture as Religion in Practice" and "Tribal Culture As the Primordial Revelation"; so here I will not be using many footnotes.

1. Basic Characteristics of the Tribals

Tribal people in general are simple, sincere, truthful, content, happy, jovial, hardworking (but only seasonally so), hospitable, generous, independent and care-free, social, egalitarian, men of few words, peace loving (non quarrelsome). Negatively they tend to be moody, lazy, easygoing, non-innovative, resistant to progress and change, and jealous not in the sense of competing with one another but of tending to pull the other down to prevent any one emerging to the top.

The above mentioned positive and negative tribal characters are not just inbuilt characteristics, but are seen by the tribals as God's commandment for them, and therefore the content of tribal ethics and morality as well. If one looks at these tribal characters, then one will notice that all these characters are centred round an anti-greed and an anti-pride ethos. For the tribals greed and pride are the capital or "original" sins, because according to their creation myth, these were the sins which caused mythical Flood and the Rain of Fire which are the symbols of death and destruction.[1] This means that God's commandment for the tribals is that they may in no way be greedy and proud and for that matter they must not even appear to be so. This is the reason why tribals imbibe all the characteristics we have mentioned above from their childhood.

Besides having these inborn and acquired characters, to prevent individuals from becoming greedy and proud tribals have organized their village communities on an egalitarian basis. Their government is based on direct democracy and their economic life on the common ownership of the land[2] and other natural resources. According to their

1. The sins of greed and pride have been expressed differently in different tribes. The Kharia myth says that human beings having become undisciplined began cutting down the fruit trees and also arrogantly demanding more and more for food. On the other hand Uraon myth says that human beings made the earth dirty with their filth and the foul smell of the rotting man-eater (Rakshasa). In the same way the Santal myth that human beings began behaving like female buffaloes. Actually in the Munda myth no reason has been given directly related to the Rain of Fire, but greed and pride has been elaborately dealt with in the Asur Legend about which mention will be made in this article later.

2. At present common ownership of the land does not exist any more, now each family owns his own land, however, the common ownership of the natural resources like the forest, mountains, rivers, etc. still exists, but meanwhile Govt. has taken them away.

direct democratic system of government, officials are elected with majority consensus. In this system there is no secret voting, and no place for individuals to stand for election. The way this system functions is that there is no power given to officials to take decisions. The power of taking decisions is kept with the community. The real function of the officials consists in arranging community meetings, explaining the purpose of these meetings, facilitating them and, finally, implementing the decisions taken by the community. Because of the mutual control exercised over each other, neither the community nor the officials get the chance of becoming greedy and proud. This is the reason why tribals have no individual charismatic leaders either in the political field or in the church circles. At present, if an individual tribal tries to come up, he is immediately rejected - he is considered a proud man. The real leader for the tribals would be that person whom the people themselves propose and approve of with a majority consensus.

It is clear, then, that an anti-greed and anti-pride system is central to the tribals, and determines and regulates every aspect of their life. Tribals, we have said, are basically anti-greed and anti-pride people because they want to escape the Flood and the Rain of Fire which are the symbols of death. The immediate theological question is therefore which death do the tribals want to escape. Our present experience is that in this present existence everybody experiences death no matter how non-greedy and non-proud one may be. Do tribals believe, then, in the coming "New Creation" and want to escape the "Second Death" mentioned in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 20:14b)? Most probably yes, but this will become clearer when we come to the tribal beliefs.

This centrality of the anti-greed and anti-pride system in the life of the tribals, throws light on tribal spirituality. Spirituality if properly understood is that fundamental experience which determines and regulates every aspect of one's life and outlook. Since it is the anti-greed and anti-pride system or mentality that is the determining factor for the tribals, it is precisely this mentality that must be regarded as the authentic spirituality of the tribals.

2. Basic Tribal Occupations

All the tribal groups have their own self-supportive occupations. Most of them are agriculturists and some, like the Birhors, Hill Kharias, Paharias are hunters. However, those who are agriculturists

also hunt; but hunting is no more their main means of livelihood, as it is for the hunting groups. But both these groups use forest products to complement their means of livelihood. What is special about their occupation whether it is agriculture or hunting is that tribals consider it to be a command of God. Tribals are therefore, not ready to take up any other profession than their own. More, doing this would be for them a sin, an anti religious act so much so that their own community members will see to it that those who take up other professions do not succeed in them. If they take to trade, their fellow tribals will neither buy from their shops nor pay the price of the goods they have taken. This is the reason why tribals are not found in business. There are other reasons too for tribals not entering into business. The anti-greed and anti-pride system we have noted above is one of them, and their carefree life could be another. Tribals are not ready to sit down the whole day in their shops, nor are they prepared to keep daily accounts. In fact, their care-free life too is part of the anti-greed and anti-pride system. For to be too much concerned about things, is a sign of greed and also the sign of pride; because too much concern shows that one does not rely on God's providence. So we begin to understand the implications of forcing tribals to give up their traditional occupations, even when this is sweetened with monetary compensation. It works out to be no more than genocide.

Another tribal idea which could be mentioned in relation to this, is the tribal concept of land, forest, rivers, mountains, etc. For the tribals land, forest, rivers, etc. are not the means of production, but are means of livelihood created and given by God. They are therefore holy and because of that they are inalienable and non-transferable. According to tribals holiness means belonging to God and not to oneself. Tribals think that land, forest, rivers, mountains, etc. belong to God or to the spirits and are therefore holy. Humankind is only the custodian of these. Today tribal lands, forests, rivers, mountains etc. are being taken away in the name of national development. This is a religious crime, like the buying off of sacred sites, temples, churches, or mosques.

ice the means of livelihood for the tribals are not the means of prc ction, their time and mode of cultivation too are fixed. Tribals cultiv te only from June to December, and after that everything and everybody goes for holiday, fields are left fallow, animals are left free, and people too go round visiting their relatives. The mode of their cultivation too is very traditional and unscientific, and so far no amount

of agricultural training has succeeded in changing the tribal mentality. Actually this traditional tribal attitude too is related to the already mentioned anti-greed and anti-pride system. For the tribals making an effort at greater production will be a sign of greed and also a sign of pride because it will show that they do not believe in the providence of God. In the creation myth this aspect has been expressed in this way that it was God who taught the primordial couple to make fields, showed them the plough, and gave them different seeds for cultivation.

3. The Tribal Social Set-Up

a) Man-Woman Relationship

Tribal society in Chotanagpur is basically a patriarchal society. This means that the father is the master of the family, he represents his family in the village sacrifices, village meetings and other community activities. It is he who inherits the ancestral property, and it is his clan name that falls upon his children. Though tribal society is a patriarchal society, there is no discrimination against women - there is equality between men and women, women are not considered inferior to men or as the objects for men, etc. This is the reason why tribal women are seen freely moving anywhere and talking with anybody. All the same there are some restrictions for women. Such restrictions include not climbing the roof, not touching the plough, not ploughing and not sowing seeds. Besides these tribal women do not actively take part in the village sacrifices, nor in the village meetings.

This understanding of the equality of men and women among the tribals comes from their creation myth itself. The creation myth of the tribals shows that when God made male and female clay-figures, he made them together, and when he made them living beings, he gave them life together. This is the reason why in tribal society man and woman are considered equal, both having been made for each other and for the running of the family. They are regarded as two wheels of the same cart or as two animals yoked together.

Among the restrictions on women that we have mentioned above, the first set of restrictions seems to be connected with sexual symbols, though tribals themselves do not speak of them in this way; while the second set is connected with religious beliefs. As for the first set, the roof (house) and the field symbolize woman, while climbing, ploughing and sowing seeds symbolize sexual intercourse. For a woman to

climb the roof of a house, or touch a plough, or sow seeds would therefore symbolize homosexuality. This is a sin against God, which displeases Him so that He stops sending rain. Tribals, usually, give only this last reason for justifying these restrictions. That is, that if women do these things there will be no rain.

On the other hand the reason why women do not take part in community sacrifices and meetings, is because various religious beliefs restrict them. In tribal society both of these community affairs are considered as dealing with God, spirits and the village traditions, and women are supposed to be ignorant of all these things because they are regarded as strangers to the village: the unmarried girls will be married off to other villages and the married ones have been brought from other villages. Neither group, therefore, belongs to the village. Thus though all the preparations are done by them, especially for sacrifices, and though they too fast, abstain from sex and take ritual baths etc., women do not take part physically in the celebration. Their role in village sacrifices, consists in making material arrangements, their own ritual preparation, and also in singing and dancing in the village, which is in fact part of the sacrifice itself. As for village meetings, there is no strict restriction as such, and occasionally certain women are called to bear witness, give explanations, etc. But in general, the understanding is they do not take active part.

As for family sacrifices there are no such restrictions, except that women and small male children are not allowed to eat the head and the liver of the victim, or for that matter, of any game. The reason is because head and liver are considered to be seats of life, and life belongs to God; so that only man, the master of the house and the representative of God, can eat them. In tribal society man is considered to be the representative of God because God as a person is imagined in the shape of a male.

b) Clan Divisions

Every tribal group is divided into clans. The names taken for clan are usually those of animals, birds, reptiles, fish, some ants (as for instance red ants), stone, paddy, salt, etc. Usually tribals do not eat objects from which their clan names are taken. But in the case of things like salt and paddy, they will practise a modified form of the taboo like avoiding extra salt, or (in the case of paddy) not drinking the water extracted from the boiled rice.

The rule is that there must be no inter-clan marriages, nor marriage outside one's own tribe. At present regarding this tribal marriage law, church is making many mistakes, which are greatly resented by the people. On the other hand anti-tribal elements are not only encouraging any kinds of marriage, but are promoting Hindu-Tribal marriages as well. Of course in such Hindu-Tribal marriages the boy is always a Hindu and the girl always a Tribal!

Traditionally there is no dowry system among tribals. In some tribes, the family of the bridegroom pays one pair of bullocks to the family of the bride, and in others (like the Uraon) the bridegroom gives one blanket to his mother-in-law, and some clothes to his in-laws. At present this tradition too is getting distorted, and taking the form of a sort of male dowry. In this distorted form of dowry, the boy is asked to pay in cash instead of bullocks and clothes.

Most of the tribes do not have any myth concerning the origin of their clans. If such myths once existed, they have been lost. However, there is one tribe which still retains its myth. In this myth we are told that once each of the sons of the primordial parents met each different thing while drinking water in the forest, where they had gone hunting. When they returned home after drinking the water, each of them found in his bundle, instead of meat of the deer they had killed, the thing which each had seen while drinking the water. Taking this to be God's intervention, the primordial parents gave to each of their sons the name of the object which he had not only seen, but also had carried home in his bundle. This is how clan names originated according to this myth.

The giving of clan names to the sons of the primordial parents is in fact how the problem of marriage in the first generation of the human race is solved. The problem was how to marry the brothers and sisters among themselves, since there were no other human beings. By giving clan names to their sons the primordial parents made them "Kutumbs". A "Kutumb" in tribal terminology means that relative with whom marriage relations can be established. Thus by changing their sons into "Kutumbs", the primordial parents gave their daughters to their own sons. However, while marrying them the primordial parents saw to it that no marriage took place between the brothers and sisters of the same age. This is the reason why even today no marriage is allowed between the eldest boy and the eldest girl. Besides, there is also the custom of reading omens while marriage negotiations are on. This reading of omens is a way of finding out God's will concerning the marriage that is planned.

c) Tribal Village-Centredness

Basically tribals are village centred people. For the tribals their village means everything - their country, their nation, their tribe, indeed their whole world. It is in their village that tribals live out their economic, political, religious and family life. It is here that they have their altar, and their place of government, their court of justice, in a word, everything. In fact tribals do not know anything beyond their village and village boundary, and are not keen on knowing either. The result of this is that tribals have developed a system of centralized government. Their government is a strictly village-centred government, run on the basis of direct democratic system about which we have spoken above.

d) Tribal Community-Centredness

We have already spoken about the common ownership of land, forest, rivers, mountains, etc. Here I would like to add a few words about the community life of the tribals.

In tribal society, there is no individual life as such. For example there are no individual dances. All their songs and dances are meant for common singing and dancing, and therefore they are not meant for TV or stage presentations. As for the authorship of the songs and dances too, there are no individual authors - nobody knows how such songs and dances have come into being. This means that there is a common authorship behind tribal songs and dances, in other words they have originated spontaneously in different situations.

As for the community life proper, there is a lot of togetherness in the tribal villages. For example, when there is heavy work to be undertaken either for the community or for the individual, the whole village is there to lend their hands.So too when somebody falls sick, all the villagers come to visit him; and when some one dies, all the villagers will be there for burial. In the same way when there is an occasion for rejoicing like an initiation rite, a marriage, the celebration of a feast day, etc., everyone will be there to rejoice. The meaning of all this is that tribals live, work, rejoice, suffer and die in solidarity with one another. In all of this tribal togetherness, drinking rice-beer plays an important part, and therefore all important occasions, including a burial, are concluded by drinking rice-beer. Drinking rice-beer together is the sign that some important agreement has been made, some heavy task has been completed or some important event has taken

place. Thus drinking rice-beer together is a kind of seal, a proof of approval from the community. In tribal society if someone does not follow the community - neither goes to other families nor invites anyone to his house - he is considered unsocial and is left alone in times of need.

4. Basic Tribal Religious Beliefs

a) Belief in One God

All the tribals are monotheists and therefore they believe in one God. Although in some tribal myths, this God is shown as conversing with his wife, in practice tribals do not believe that God has a wife. Again among some tribes God is understood to be the union of both male and female, but when he is imagined as a person, he is always imagined a male, and this is the reason why, as we have said, tribal society is a patriarchal society.

The God of the tribals about which we are talking has actually no proper name as such, and whatever names tribals use for God in their respective languages, these are either relational names or symbolic names. Among relational names are the ones in which God is addressed as the Old One or as the Grandfather; whereas among symbolic names are those in which God is called *Bero-Lerang* (Sun-Moon), *Singbonga* and *Chando Baba* (the Sun-spirit), *Dharmes* (the shining one?), *Marang Buru* (the Great Mountain), *Ponomesor* (the Living Rock), *Sakhi Gosain* (the friendly strange sage) etc. If we follow the sequence of the creation myth from various tribes, then we will notice that in the beginning of creation God is addressed by relational names, namely as the Old One, or as the Grandfather, whereas the symbolic names occur mainly in connection with sacrificial rituals. This means that the Old One or the Grandfather, signifies the real creator God who is invisible; whereas the symbolic names indicate his reflections and images. Like Christianity, tribal myths too, have a place for man becoming the perfect image of God. In the Asur Legend of the Mundas it is said that *Singbonga* comes in the form of a wound-infested boy and destroys the arrogant greedy Asurs. So also *Sakhi Gosain* is a human figure. "Gosain" in tribal understanding is that unknown sage-like person who appears suddenly, nobody knows from where, and goes nobody knows where, but is thought of as knowing medicines and incantations for curing sickness. If he is a "sakhi"

(friend), then he will be still more helpful: that is why God is named Sakhi Gosain. Thus in tribal belief too we get two persons in one God - if the image and reflection of God is taken as a real person.

According to the tribal myths, God is understood as having created human beings in his own image and likeness. This idea is expressed most clearly in the creation myth. According to this myth God is described as coming in the form of a man and making male and female clay-figures. Since there were no other beings apart from himself, he made those male and female clay-figures like himself. Thus human beings have been created in the image and likeness of God. In this act of creation God is imagined a single person, whereas he creates two human beings - male and female. God is, therefore, understood as the unity of both male and female. This same idea has also been expressed through his relational name, that is, God the Grandfather. In tribal society grandsons are taken to be images of their grandfathers; and grand-daughters images of their grandmothers, as we shall see below.

In the creation myth, it has been indicated that God is the most intimate friend and companion of human beings, he is like a play-mate to human beings. In one of the myths (a Kharia myth), it is said that God was playing with mud when he made clay-figures. These clay-figures eventually became human beings. This form of the myth shows that when God was making clay-figures as he played in the mud, he was in reality creating play-mates for himself. Since the same clay-figures turned into human beings, they are the companions and play-mates of God. This relationship of friendship or companionship to God is reflected in the man-woman relationship. As man and woman (husband-wife) are related to each other as friends, companions and play-mates, so too are human beings related to God.

The other things in creation like the Sun-Moon, birds, reptiles, fruits, trees, different crops, etc. have been created for the sake of human beings, but the sequence of the tribal myth shows that they have been created only as the need arose. When man asked for meat, birds and reptiles were created, when man needed seeds for cultivation, seeds were created, and when the marriage of man and woman was needed, rice-beer was introduced. Thus we see that according to tribal myths, everything has been created for the sake of human beings.

b) Belief in the Existence of Spirits

Besides believing in one God, tribals believe in the existence of numerous spirits. According to the belief of the tribals there are mainly three types of spirits: guardian spirits, harmful spirits and ancestral spirits. All these different spirits are believed to be shades, that is invisible forms, of dead human beings. Guardian spirits are the shades of those human beings who died during the mythical Flood and the Rain of Fire. They are called guardian or benevolent spirits because they have agreed to protect crops, cattle and people from wild animals, plagues and alien spirits, provided people offer them periodical sacrifices, which are actually seen as their share of the produce of the land. Thus these guardian spirits are pre-Flood and pre-Rain of Fire human beings. According to the sequence of the myth, the present human race and also the present visible world, are a kind of re-creation of the original (predestruction creation), and are in fact only the duplicates and imitations of the real original human beings, who became invisible, and now exist as spirits or shades. According to the tribals, guardian spirits are like police men patrolling the tribal villages and their boundaries, carrying huge axes.

The harmful spirits are those invisible (dead) human beings, whose shades have not been brought back to their respective families on account of their unnatural or accidental death, because unnatural or accidental death is taken to be judgment of God. The belief here is that these invisible human beings need sacrifices for their survival, and since there is no one to offer regular sacrifices to these ostracized invisible human beings, they exact sacrifices from anyone they can, by frightening people or causing them sickness. etc. They are therefore termed harmful spirits. It is sometimes also believed that these spirits are manipulated by malicious persons for the purpose of causing trouble to some families and persons.

The third type of spirits are the ancestral spirits. Ancestral spirits are those dead or invisible ancestors whose shades have been brought back to their respective families and are looked after by daily offering of food as well as by periodical sacrifices during feast days. In return, these ancestral spirits look after the well-being of the living family members. Thus these ancestral spirits too come under the category of benevolent spirits.

Besides these three categories of spirits, there are also some tamed or individually owned spirits. It is believed that these tamed spirits are the shades of unmarried-married people. Their shades are

not really ostracized. They are, however, not kept inside the house, but behind the house, and they are sometimes tamed for the purpose of stealing grain and cooked rice from other families.

Finally, it is important to realize that benevolent spirits too can turn into harmful spirits, if they feel they are being neglected. Tribals thus tend to be continually preoccupied with spirits, because they are busy all the time trying to find out what spirits are behind the troubles they are experiencing.

c) Belief in Life after Death

From the belief in the existence of spirits, it is clear that tribals believe in the continued invisible survival of persons after death. According to the tribals it is not just the life principle that continues living, but it is the whole person that survives. Actually tribals themselves are not very clear as to what happens to the life principle of the person after his or her death - perhaps it goes back to God or becomes one with the invisible form of the person. Anyhow the belief of the tribals is that the whole person continues living invisibly after his or her death, and they also believe that such invisible forms occasionally appear to certain persons in various forms including their former human forms. Thus for the tribals, the so called "soul" is the invisible form of the whole person itself, that which tribals call a shade.

We have mentioned above that the invisible forms of the persons need material things for their survival. This is the reason why after burial things needed by the shade are kept around the graveyard, and with the help of a reed or an unbleached thread a small path or a hole is made on the headside of the grave to allow the shade to come out of the grave. After a week or so (usually on the 9th day), this shade is called back to the family and from then on it becomes an ancestral spirit.

During the burial rites, tribals wash themselves immediately after burial, and when they return to the courtyard of the deceased, they rub their limbs with oil and turmeric powder. Among Kharias they mix a tiny fish or a tiny crab with turmeric. Here washing oneself is surely the symbol of purification but using turmeric (mixed with tiny fish or crab or both) is the symbol of the affirmation of life. The turmeric is the symbol of the survival of life in spite of Rain of Fire,[3] and the fish and

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3. Turmeric roots are taken for the symbol of life because they look reddish as though having been roasted in the fire and yet they are alive.

the crab are symbols of the presence of life in the very midst of the Flood (water). For the tribals the Flood and the Rain of Fire are the symbols of death. To show that the Flood and the Rain of Fire have come to a dying person, he is given a little water to drink when he is agonizing; and when he is dead a coin (traditionally a copper coin) is used to be placed in his mouth. Water is given to symbolize the drowning of human beings during the Flood; the coin is put into the mouth to symbolize the eating of fire, because when the Rain of Fire fell human beings might have looked up with open mouths and thus eaten the fire. Finally, when the body is laid inside the grave, a handful of burning thatch grass too is (traditionally) dropped on it. This is the symbol of getting roasted by fire. Since God roasted human beings to kill them, the head and livers of the sacrificial victims too are roasted and offered. Among tribals when something or somebody is instrumental in some one's death, then that particular person or thing is said to "have eaten" the dead person. During the Rain of Fire God was the cause of death and so he too is said to have `eaten' human beings. Because he did this by roasting them, he is offered roasted things.

We have said above that after burial people purify themselves, and a week after the burial the purification of the whole family takes place. The reason for all these purification is that the dead person is considered to be defiled. The reason why the dead person is so considered is that he is thought of as having come into contact with the spirit world (he himself has become spirit), and this spirit world is a non-tribal world. Prior to the Rain of Fire there was no tribe, and the Pre-Rain of Fire human beings were tribeless. The dead person comes into contact with these and so is defiled. This same ritual is also performed when there is a birth. Here too the new born baby is taken to be outside the tribe and therefore defiled. Here the understanding is that the new born child comes from the invisible spirit world. Since during birth, mother comes in contact with the baby, she too becomes defiled. So a rite of purification called "Chathi" is conducted a week after birth.

d) Belief in the Re-Generation of Persons.

The tribal belief in the regeneration or rebirth of the persons means that his or her image gets born in his or her grandchildren, always according to his/her own sex. Thus grandsons become the images of their grandfathers, and grand-daughters become images of their

grand-mothers. In tribal relational system, all the yoking and respect-ful relations are based on this belief. In tribal society there exists a yoking relationship between a grandfather and his granddaughters, between a grand-mother and her grandsons, between a married woman and her husband's younger brothers, between a married man and the sisters of his wife.

In these yoking relationships, the grandfather sees his wife's images in his grand-daughters and therefore he keeps a yoking relationship with them. In the same way the grand-mother sees her husband's images in her grandsons and therefore she too keeps a yoking relationship with them. On the other hand a married man takes all the younger sisters of his wife as the images of the same one grandmother and therefore when he marries one, he thinks he has married all the younger sisters of his wife along with her. In the same way a married woman also takes all the younger brothers of her husband as the images of their one grandfather and therefore she too thinks that by getting married to husband, she gets married to all his younger brothers. As regards yoking relationship between the broth-ers and sisters of the two families among whom a marriage takes place, the rest of the brothers and sisters (especially the sisters of the married woman and the brothers of her husband) think that since all the sisters are images of their one and the same grandmother, and all the brothers are images of their one and the same grandfather, when one of the sisters gets married to one of the brothers, then the rest of the sisters and brothers also get married along with them. So there exists a yoking relationship among them. Yoking relationship for the tribals implies an actually unreal but spiritually true and possibly real husband-wife relationship. In the tribal relational system relations with their parents, uncles, elders, are not yoking but respectful relation-ships. This means one cannot use vulgar words and cannot act in an indecent way in front of them. One has always to address them with respect.

In the tribal relational system just described many things about tribal belief in the re-generation of the persons become clear. The first thing is that in this belief system there is no physical re-generation of a person, but only the re-generation of his or her image. The second thing that becomes clear is that in this belief system to get a person's image born, the physical death of the person is not necessary: grandchildren are automatically the images of their grandparents even if these are still alive. The third thing that becomes clear is that

in this belief system, there is no one-person-to-one-person re-gener-ation. Instead one person's image can get born in one of many persons, and therefore a person can have many images. This is the reason why one grandfather can have many grandsons and one grandmother can have many grand-daughters. Actually this aspect of belief is related to another belief and that belief is connected with spirits. Concerning spirits tribals believe that one and the same spirit is capable of appearing in many forms, which tribals call"Chaena-Baena" appearance. Actually one person's images getting born in one or many persons is his "Chaena-Baena appearances".

Grandchildren, we have noted, are the re-generations of their grandparents according to their sex. During "Chaity" (birth purifica-tion), when the "name-giving" ritual takes place, people actually identify the baby with his grandparents. For this ritual, people drop two (three) "arwa" rice grains in the water contained in a leaf-cup. The first grain is dropped in the name of God, and the second grain in the name of child's grandfather or mother depending on the child's sex. If both the grains meet while floating, then that grandfather or mother becomes a synonym (Mitta, Bunjim) of the child. This means the identity of the child has been discovered. In practical life, the grand-parents so identified become the protectors of the child, and if they are already dead, then their family members become child's protectors.

This belief in the re-generation of the persons, is also found in the creation myth. The myth says that when the Rain of Fire came, one couple (brother and sister) hid themselves inside marshy land (a crab hole) under the care of King Sembhu and Queen Dakai. After the Rain of Fire when God asked for the brother and sister (according to some myths God himself discovered them), then, after some negotiation, They were given back to God. Here the understanding is that during the Rain of Fire the brother and sister too were dead because according to tribal terminology to be hidden, to be invisible, etc. means to be like a shade, in other words to be dead; and so being brought out from the marshy land or crab hole, will mean that new life was given to them. This means that they were not the original beings: they were only the duplicates and images of the original - the original having become invisible, dead. We shall return to this myth when we discuss tribal belief in a future resurrection in the next section, when this aspect of myth will hopefully become clearer.

e) Belief in a Future Resurrection

Besides the above described belief in the re-generation of the person's images, tribals also believe in the future resurrection. Actually this aspect of tribal belief has not yet been pointed out by any author so far, but tribals in fact do believe or at least hope in the future resurrection of the dead. First of all, this belief has been expressed in the tribal creation myth itself which we have already mentioned above in connection with the belief in the re-generation of the person's images.

For the interpretation of the above mentioned myth in connection with the future resurrection, we have to bring the whole picture which the myth presents. The myth says that when the original human beings became greedy and proud, began cutting down the trees, began demanding for more things, made the earth dirty, began behaving like she buffaloes, etc. God sent, first the Flood and then the Rain of Fire to destroy them. The Rain of Fire actually destroyed the whole world along with human beings, except for one couple about which we have spoken above. Here the understanding of the myth is that human beings and perhaps other things as well, were physically and visibly immortal prior to the Rain of Fire; but because of their sins, their physical immortality has been taken away by the Rain of Fire (death). Here the understanding of the myth is that the original immortality remains intact; it has only been made invisible. The bringing out of the brother and sister (and perhaps the whole of creation along with them) from the marshy land or the crab hole, that we spoke above, meant therefore the giving of a temporary physical appearance to the original immortal form which had now become invisible. The argument here as regards future resurrection is that if God is able to give temporary physical form to the original immortal, invisible form of people, then he is capable of giving permanent physical and visible form as well.[4] Perhaps this is what tribals are trying to regain by their strict obser- vance of their traditions. Otherwise there is no meaning in their strict observance of their traditions. Otherwise there is no meaning in their

4. Actually here itself we come across the tribal understanding of the symbol and reality. For the tribals the present visible and physical form of everybody and perhaps of everything as well, is only a symbol, image and reflection of the real within the visible form itself and not outside of it.

remaining a true tribal if they were to end their lives merely becoming ancestral or harmful spirits.

Tribals are quite aware that resurrection is not automatic and that people cannot rise by their own efforts. They can, therefore, only hope in God. Tribals express this aspect of their hope through their various types of burial. Among tribals there are at least three types of burial - North-South, West-East and diagonally from corner to corner. When tribals bury their dead in the North-South direction, they turn the face of the dead towards the East. The explanation tribals give about this kind of burial is that it is to remind the dead man of his true home that his head is placed to the North, while turning the face of the dead towards the East is a way of making sure that he looks at God - the East being the house of God. As regards corner to corner burial, people say that it is to prevent the dead person from kicking the East and displeasing God by his kick that he is buried in this way. Finally about West-East burial, people say that this is to make the dead see the East as soon as he gets up, since when buried in this way the corpse is made to lie on its back with its head to the West.

As regards belief in the future resurrection, the argument from these three types of burial is that if the final end of human beings is just to become spirits, then there is no use of reminding the dead of his true home or making them watch the East or preventing them from kicking it. The meaning of all these different types of burial is that tribals are certainly looking further for revelation from God, perhaps they are hoping in the restoration of their lost physical and visible immortality. Such a restoration can be done only by God, because it is he who has made it invisible, and it is in the hope of his doing this that the dead are made to look at God continually.

f) Belief in Black and White magic

Tribals believe that there are certain women (rarely men) who possess special techniques for harming people. About such women tribals say that they turn into black cats, take the livers from human beings and eat them, send poisonous arrows, utter curses, send deadly shells, poison invisibly, send ferocious spirits to trouble the families, etc., and on the moonless night of November they gather together and dance in a lonely haunted place, naked, or rather, wearing brooms with lighted lamps on their arms. Concerning these

techniques, people say that such women acquire these techniques from a teacher. On the other hand there is also a belief that there are certain men (rarely women) who know how to identify such witches and the spirits behind them, as well as to nullify their spells and control the spirits.

Whether these beliefs are true or not, they are wide-spread and strong, and many quarrels and murders take place because of them. Why such beliefs exist is still another question. According to the myth of the Santals these techniques originate from God himself. But whatever people say, one thing is certain: there are certain people who have an inborn quality in them (in their hands) like the quality of water divining. About such people it is said that they succeed in all their undertakings. The trees and creepers they plant always yield plenty of fruit; their medicines are always effective; their domesticated fowls and animals always multiply; their liquor is always strong. This quality is a positive quality, and tribals perhaps attribute a negative quality of the same kind to some queer looking and queer behaving women, that is to the kind of women usually accused of being witches.

Parallel to this belief in witchcraft and its counterpart, there is also a belief that there are certain men (not women) who are capable of changing themselves into tigers and from tigers into men again. At present this belief is not very prevalent. The reason is that in many places there are no tigers any more due to the disappearance of forests.

Such are the main beliefs of the tribals. Besides these, tribals have other beliefs as well, which for lack of space will not allow us to explore. Tribals believe, for instance, that there is an invisible world, parallel to this visible world, about which we have given some indications here and there. So too tribals believe that there is a necessary punishment and judgment for those who have done wrong, and accidental or unnatural-natural death as well as worm-infested wounds, are taken as God's judgment on wrong-doing. Finally tribals also believe that there are people who offer human sacrifices and so on.

5. Conclusion

1) From all that has been said above, it is clear that there is in tribal society a very close connection between belief and life. Behind every aspect of tribal life, there is a belief that serves as its justification, explanation, and even as its source. On the other

hand there is no sterile belief among the tribals, one that has no life activity as its expression.

2) The main tribal beliefs, we have seen, are contained in their creation myth. But if this myth is to be properly understood it has to be interpreted from the day-to-day lives of the people. We might even say that creation myth is the collection of human realities in a story form.

3) Hence among tribals, life precedes religious beliefs, because it is from the study of the tribal life that we come to know the beliefs of the tribals. In this respect tribal religions are the opposite of non-tribal religions. In non-tribal religions it is the belief aspect that is presented first to the people, and then they are asked to live accordingly. But our study of religion and culture has shown that here it is the concrete existential life of the people which is the source of their beliefs, and it is through the study of the concrete life of the tribals that we come to know their beliefs. Thus we see that in tribal religion concrete materialization of beliefs in life are more important than the verbal expressions of belief, which may remain mere concepts and ideas.

4) All this shows that there is an inseparable union between tribal religion and life (culture). Both mutually support, justify, and give meaning to each other. In fact the two are so inseparably related and constitutively interwoven that they become almost synony-mous. They are like two faces of the same coin. Thus we can say that the fundamental character of tribal religion and culture is their oneness, their inseparable union. Tribal beliefs and tribal life correspond perfectly to each other.

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The Tribes of Israel

Israel appears in the Bible as a tribal people who enter Canaan as a unified group of twelve tribes descended from a common ancestor, Jacob/Israel. This simple biblical account of Israel's origins is problematic. It is contradicted by evidence within the Bible as well as by archeological data from outside. By examining carefully what the Bible has to say about the social units of Israelite society, comparing the various lists of tribes that the Bible provides, studying the role of the tribes in various early biblical texts, and enquiring into the possible existence of a central sanctuary for Israel, the author is able to show that Martin Noth's celebrated hypothesis of an amphictyony of twelve tribes in pre-monarchical Israel is a mirage. Instead, we must postulate a tribal league whose organization prepared the way for the monarchy.

It is common knowledge among those familiar with the historical development of the Old Testament literature that the Yahwist author has added the sections of the Patriarchal History (Gen 12-36) and the Primeval History (Gen 2-11) to what is usually called the National History (Ex-Num), and that these first two "histories" are his own original composition. Doubtless he had access to a number of oral traditions about the so-called patriarchs as well as to written myths from Babylonia and elsewhere. It is apparent however that the oral tradition available to the Yahwist for composing the National History seems, from the very beginning, to take for granted a reality which is known as "Israel", sometimes described as *benê yi'sra'el* or "the children of Israel". It is further accepted by Old Testament scholars that "Israel" came into being much after its supposed origins in Egypt, only at the time of the settlement in Canaan. Further we are not even sure whether the people who came out of Egypt were already organised into tribes before the time of the Settlement.

This paper would like to study how and why the group or groups of people that came out of Egypt and finally settled down in Canaan gradually formed themselves into tribes, how they interacted with the sections of the population that had never left Canaan, and what was it that led them into banding themselves together into what later came to be known as "Israel".

One of the most discussed attempts to answer these questions has

come from the German scholar Martin Noth, who in the year 1930 proposed the theory that Israel was originally an amphictyony or a sacral league of twelve tribes gathered around a central sanctuary. He found parallels for this in Etruscan and Greek models.[1] In the year 1950 Noth wrote his monumental *Geschichte Israels (History of Israel)* whose first part was entitled *Israel als Zwölfstammebund* (Israel as a confederacy of twelve tribes). There does not seem to be a shift here from his original thesis.[2] Obviously Martin Noth was led to the idea of the amphictyony from the number *twelve* which appears in so many of the lists of Israelite tribes that are available in the Old Testament.

I have been able to trace twenty-two such lists, four in Genesis, one in Exodus, eight in Numbers, two in Deuteronomy, one in Joshua, two in the Book of Ezekiel and four in the First Book of Chronicles. In addition to this the Book of Joshua mentions the twelve tribes when the allocation of the land is being described in chapters 13 to 19. The problem of course is the age of these lists. The later lists, obviously, are mere repetitions of the earlier ones. Those in the Book of Chronicles and in Ezekiel, and even those from the Priestly authors are clearly late. Noth, however, seems to think that the list in Num 1:5-15 is as early as the Settlement. All the four lists in Genesis contain the names of Levi and Joseph. The same is true of Dt 27. Ex 1:1-5 has the same names as Gen 46:8-25 except that the order is slightly different. Curiously enough Ez 48: 30-35 also has Levi and Joseph, whereas Ez 48:2-7,23-27 drops Levi and changes Joseph to Manasseh and Ephraim. Dt 33 does have Levi but replaces Joseph with Ephraim and Manasseh while dropping out Simeon. It can be deduced from the material available to us that Simeon seems to have lost its identity as an independent tribe and got amalgamated into Judah. Far more complex is the problem of the disappearance of Levi as secular tribe. The secular tribe of Levi appears as such in Gen 34 along with that of Simeon! (cf v.30). In the Book of Joshua, however, the tribe of Levi is mentioned, but as a religious tribe owning only common grazing pastures throughout the territory of the various tribes of Israel. No land is allotted to them (cf Jos 21: 9-40).

1. *Das system der zwölf stämme Israels*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966, reprint of 1930 edition.
2. *Geschichte Israels*, Gottingen: Vendenhoeck und Ruprecht, 7th ed. 1969. Ch 2, §7 is entitled *Das Zwölfstämmesystem* (The Twelve-tribe system). English transl., *The History of Israel*, London: Black, reprint 1959 (1st ed. 1958)

Sociological Units in Israelite Society

1. The Family

At this juncture it becomes imperative that we learn something about the sociological units into which early Israelite society was divided. The smallest unit seems to have been the *bayît* (house, family, house-hold) or the *bêt'ab* (father's house). Both the terms appear together synonymously in the prescription for the celebration of the passover meal (Ex 12:3). Now the word *bayît* has a variety of meanings in Hebrew ranging from a material house (Am 3:15: Mi 2:2) to a family like Joshua's (Jos 24:15), and even a dynasty, like Saul's (2Sm 3:10), David's (2 Sm 7:11-5), Jehu's (Hos :1:4), or Ahab's (Mi 6:16). At times this word is also used for a clan as for example *bêt harekabîm,* the house of the Rechabites (Jer 35:2). The expression *yelîd bayît* (house-born slave) shows that "slaves" were also considered part of the household (Gen 17: 27; Qoh 2:7). At times the word *bayît* is also used for a single tribe as for Benjamin (2 Sm 3:9). Further the word *bayît* or house is used for the whole community of the Northern tribes which is called the *bêt yisra'el* or the House of Israel (Am 5:1). The word *bêt yehudâ* (House of Judah) is used for the Southern tribes alone (2Sm 2:4.10). The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel use the expression House of Israel (*bêt yisra'el*) for the whole people of God even when the Northern Kingdom had already disappeared from the stage of history! (Ez 18:31; cf Jr 31:33).

2. The Clan

The next unit in Israelite society is the *mishpahâ* which is normally translated as "clan". Its etymology seems to be from the verb *shapah*, "to pour", the undertones being sexual. Closely connected with this is the word *shiphhâ* or maidservant. Thus it includes many more blood related persons and "slaves" than our family. At times of course it is synonymous with "family" as when the text speaks of "my father's family", *mishpahat'abî* (1Sm 18:18). It is not clear why the tribe of Dan is called both *mishpahâ* (Jg 13-2;18:2-11) as well as *shebet* (Jg 18:1).[3] The tribe of Levi is clearly subdivided into clans (*mishpahot*). Thus

3. It is of course true that Dan was first a clan and only later grew into a tribe but it is also true that the text uses both *mishpahâ* and *shebet* indiscriminately. See Jg 18,1-2. Further in v.1 we find *shebet* (tribe) and in v.2 *mishpahâ* (clan). If the historical process was reflected the order would have been the opposite. See also v.11 where we again have *mishapahâ* (clan).

from levi's son Gershom come the Libnite and the Shimeite clans, from Kohath the Amramite, the Izharite, the Hebronite and the Uzzielite clans, and from his third son Merari, the Mahlite and the Mushite clans (cf. Num 3: 21-39). A curious text applies this term even to the whole community of Israel, the whole *mishpahâ* (family) Yhwh brought out of Egypt, in contradistinction to all the *mishpahôt* (families) of the earth (Am 3:1f).

3. The Tribe

The largest unit in Israelite society is the tribe. The etymology of the English word "tribe" is derived from the Latin *tres* or *tria*, three, thus showing the origin of the Roman people from the three original families of Rome.[4] It is not clear what exactly the word "tribe" means. It seems to refer to a large group of families or clans claiming a real or imaginary blood descendant from an eponymous patriarch.[5] The Hebrew has at least three synonyms for this word. Thus we have *shebet, matteh,* and *'elep*. Occasionally we also find *'ummâ* (cf Ps 117:1;Gen.25:16; Num 25:15). Apparently *shebet* seems to be the oldest of the three. The Priestly Author seems to prefer the term *matteh*. The last of the three terms, *'elep*, appears rarely (cf.Num 1:16; Jos 22:30). Both the terms *shebet* and *matteh* seem to be synonymous and mean rod, staff, club or sceptre. However *matteh* can also mean branch. The connotation could refer to either blood relationship, that is to persons belonging to the same "stock" or to those under the "authority" of one chief. The word *'elep*, another synonym for "tribe" which can also mean "a thousand", could imply that a tribe is that social unit which is capable of mustering one thousand soldiers.

4. Tribal chiefs

The tribes seem to be under the authority of one man who is variously called *nasî'* (leader), *'allûp* (chief) or *ro'sh* (head). Martin Noth seems to think that *nasî'* should be translated as *Sprecher* (active), that is, as one who raises his voice, and so is the speaker or spokesperson of the tribe. But since the verb *nasa* means to lift up or raise, the *nasî'* could mean one who is raised above the others

4. Cf. W.L. Skeat, *A Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, Oxford, 1967, where he refers to the Latin *tribus* and the umbrian *trifo*.
5. Cf. R. de Vaux. *Ancient Israel, Its Life and Institutions*, London: Darton 1961, where he says, "a tribe is an autonomous group of families who believe they are descended from a common ancestor".

(passive) as head or representative of the tribe. There are references to Ishmaelite *nesi'îm* (Gen 17:20; 25:16) to a Midianite *nasî* (Num 25:18) and to a Hivite *nasî* (Gen 34:2).[6] The oldest reference to an Israelite *nasî* is to be found in the Book of the Covenant (Ex 22:27). The remainder of the references to the *nesi'îm* are from P. An important text is to be found in the Book of Numbers where twelve such persons are mentioned by name. In conclusion we are told that they were men of repute in the community (*qeri'ê ha'edâ*),leaders of their ancestral clans (*nesi'ê mattôt'abôtam)*, chiefs (*ra'shê'alpê yisra'el*) of Israel's hosts (Num 1:5-16). Apparently they had been named (*niqqebûbeshemot*) that is, singled out from the community and appointed by Moses and Aaron (Num 1:17). In chapter 13 of the Book of Numbers twelve other men are mentioned who were to be respon- sible for reconnoitring the land of Canaan. They too are called both *nasî'* (Num 13:2) as well as *ra'shîm* or chiefs (V.3). What   the relationship of these to the *ziqnê ha'am* or "eladers of the people" is, we are nowhere told. These are mentioned in the covenant making ceremony near the mountain (cf.Ex.24-1:14). The Edomite and Horite chiefs are called *'allûpîm* (Gen 36:15-43;Ex 15:15). The word also appears in a late prophetical text (*'allûpê yehûdâ*) for the leaders of Judah (Zech 12:5).Who the *pinnôt kol ha'am* is not quite clear. The phrase is usually translated as "leaders of all the people" (cf Jg 20:2;1Sm 14:38).

That these three are indeed the sociological units in Israel is clear from the episode of Achan who was found guilty of defying the ban. Joshua casts lots first on the tribes (*shebatîm*), then on the clans (*mishpahôt*) and finally on the families (*battîm*), and thus Achan is identified as Achan, son of Carmi, son, of Zabdi (family), son of Zerah (clan) of the tribe of Judah (Jos:16-18). P also corroborates this (cf.Num 1-20:43).

What becomes clear from the study of these three different Hebrew expressions corresponding to our family, clan and tribe is that Hebrew words are not clearly defined as in Greek. They are very fluid and the same expression can be used for different realities. In fact

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6. All the texts containing *nesi'îm* in the plural are from P. Num 25,14-18 does not help to throw more light on the matter.

Hebrew terms are not only polyvalent but at times even ambivalent![7] Thus the words *bayît* and *mishpahâ* are often interchangeable. We have also seen that *mishpahôt* and *mattôt* are also interchangeable (cf Num 1:16). Finally we have seen that *bayît* could also be used for the sum total of the various tribes. Further, caution is needed while analysing the terms by being aware of which literary tradition we are dealing with at each stage. This is specially true while studying the material from the Priestly Authors.

Tribal Structure in Exodus and Numbers

As I have already stated above, the point of departure of the pentateuchal narrative is the Golden Age of David and Solomon when Israel was not only a great nation but an empire (cf Gen 12:lff). Going backwards into the oral tradition one gets the impression that the Yahwist himself seems to have taken over a synthesis of the earlier oral traditions[8] from the stand-point of some sort of a federation of the various tribes during the pre-monarchical period calling itself "Israel". Thus it is taken for granted that the people who wandered into Egypt in search of food were already banded together into tribes and that their number was twelve. Further it is assumed that this whole company along with some other non-descript groups made a bid for freedom at the Exodus (cf.Ex.12:37f.). This text is normally attributed to the Yahwist. Of course the Priestly Author goes further and assumes that Israel left Egypt as a well-organised society, stratified into army divisions of the twelve tribes (cf.Ex 12:40f.). This is even more forcefully brought out in the Book of Numbers where Moses takes a census of the people of Israel, and six *hundred* and three thousand five hundred and fifty males capable of military service are registered for the twelve tribes (Num 1:44ff.). Another text gives a round figure of six hundred thousand (cf.Ex 12:37). In the next chapter

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7 Thus *hesed* can mean both grace (Gunst, Gute, Huld) and disgrace (Schande), and *shetum ha'ayîn* can mean either "with far-seeing eye" (mitgeoffnetem auge) or "blind", i.e, "with closed eyes", (mit geschlossenen augen)! For the first example see *Hebraisches und Aramaisches Lexikon Zum Alten Testament.* W. Baumgartner, Leiden, 1967, *Lieferung* I, and for the second example Idem by J.J.Stamm, Leiden 1990, *Lieferung* IV.
8 This would corresond to M. Noth's *Grundlage* (G basis). See his A *History of Pentateuchal Traditions*, Scholars Press, Atlanta 1981, (reprint), pp.34f, and passim. For details see index of subjects and *'G' Basis.*

of the Book of Numbers the order of the march will be described in detail, with four contingents of three tribes each having its standard, and with the Levites in the middle in charge of the Tent of Meeting (Num 2:1-34).

How little history there is in this can be gathered from the Excursus in D.Kellermann's book, *Die Priesterschrift von Numeri 1,1 bis 10.10* (The Priestly Author in Num 1:1-10,10).[9] Two bits of information that can be gathered from the Pentateuchal narrative corroborate this. At the beginning of the Book of Exodus in the section attributed to the Elohist we are told that the Israelites had just two mid-wives, Shiphrah and Puah, for the whole population (Ex 1:15-21). And in the section which gives us some information on the Tent (later called the Tent of Meeting), we are told that whenever Moses went out of the camp to the Tent all the people would rise and that each person would stand at the entrance of one's tent and watch Moses until he reached the Tent! (Ex 33:7f.). This would be impossible in the context of a population which would have amounted to about two millions.

The organisation of the people into tribes with their own chiefs or leaders seems to be a later retrojection specially in the case of the Priestly Author. That the people were not altogether devoid of any organisation seems clear from the fact that some representatives of the people do approach Pharaoh. But even these representatives, the foremen or overseers of the sons of Israel (*shotrê benê yisra'el*) seem to have been appointed by the Pharaoh's slave-drivers (*nogsê par'ô*). The versions are not consistent in the rendering of these two expressions (cf.Ex 5:6-14).[10] Further when Moses is shown as playing a mediator's role in the sealing of the covenant with Yhwh, the representatives of the people are given as Aaron (who seems to be a layman in the non-Priestly Author's sections), and his sons Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders (*zeqenîm*) of Israel (cf.Ex 24:1-2.9-11),where they are given the unique honorific title *'âsîlîm* or notables (v.11). It is not sure whether the "elders" or "elders of Israel" is a later retrojection. If the structuring of society into tribes with chiefs had existed at that

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9. *Cf.BZAW* 120., W.de Gruyter & co., Berlin 1970, Excursus 2. *Das Problem der Zahlen in Num 1.* pp. 159-163

10. RSV renders *nogsim* as "taskmasters" and *shotrim* as "foremen", whereas JB has "slave-drivers for *nogsim* and uses both "foremen" and "overseers" for shotrim thus creating three categories. The *nogsim* could either be *nogsê ha`am* (v. 10), *nogsê ba`am* (v.6) or *nogsê par`ô* (v.14)

time, it would have been obvious that Moses would have taken them with him, one chief per tribe. The twelve *massebôt* (stele) representing the twelve tribes seem to be a later interpolation (Ex 24:4).

Moses himself as he is departing for his appointment with Yhwh tells the people that they have Aaron and Hur with them for setting all their quarrels and litigations (Ex 24:14). How little organisation these people had or how unstructured society at that time was, is evident from the advice Jethro gave Moses, his son-in-law, when he advised him to appoint leaders (*sarîm*) over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens (Ex 18:13-26). One more instance to be found in the Book of Numbers proves the absence of any stratified leadership during the wandering in the desert. The Reubenites Dathan and Abiram, seem in fact to be complaining against Moses for ruling with too much centralisation not to say autocratically (Num 16:1.12-14.25.27b-32a).[11] We pass over the list of the twelve leaders (*nesi'îm*) who were sent out by Moses from the wilderness of Zin (Num 13:21) or the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh (V.26) to reconnoitre the land.[12] This seems to be a later retrojection. What interests us here is that the report they brought concerning the walled cities and the inhabitants of the land of Canaan and their internecine wars,[13] frightened the people so much that they wanted to appoint a leader (*ro'sh*) to take them back to Egypt (Num 13:4). Once again we see that there is no organised tribal leadership here at all. And except in the narratives of the Priestly Authors where Moses speaks to Aaron who passes the commands on to the people, Moses is always shown to be speaking directly to the people and not through their tribal representatives.

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11. Num 16 is a fusion of J and P, where the first presents a political rebellion under Dathan and Abiram and the second a religious or clerical one under Korah.

12. The desert of Zin is to be given preference over the desert of Paran. Zin is also mentioned in Num 20, 1 and in the itineraries of Num 33,36 as being near Kadesh. There Hazeroth is mentioned immediately after Kibroth hattaavah which is much closer to Sinai. Apparently Num 13,26 and Num 12, 16 represent another tradition.

13. This is how the phrase '*eres 'okelet yoshbêha* should be interpreted (cf. Num 13, 32), and not as if the inhabitants were cannibals!

The Settlement in Canaan

1. The Book of Joshua

There is no need here to discuss the well-known problem of the Book of Joshua which seems to make claims that Joshua and "all Israel" conquered (*laqah*) the whole land of Canaan in two swift swoops, one in the South (Jos 10) and the other in the North (Jos 11) after which the whole country was conquered[14] and the land had rest from war (Jos 11:23). The book itself shows a serious internal contradiction when we are told later on that "yet much of the country still remains to be subdued (*lerishtah*)"(Jos 13:1). We are also informed that the House of Joseph is advised by Joshua to cut down the forests and occupy the land "since you cannot drive out the Canaanite because of his iron chariots and his superior strength"(Jos 17:18).[15] The Book of Joshua is written from the perspective either of David who had conquered the whole land, or more probably from the time of the reconquest of the land in the time of Josiah who was trying to restore the empire of David at a time when there was a political vacuum in Assyria.

2. The Major Judges

We come now to the Book of Judges. There is here no unified all-Israelite concerted effort in conquering the land. The problem of subduing the inhabitants of the plain, probably the Philistines, seems to be insurmountable because of their iron chariots (Jg 1:19b). In fact here we are shown how each tribe,clan or a small group of either, is trying to get some land for itself. If these undertakings were at all successful they seem to have taken place in the hilly areas (cf Jg 1:1-36). Occasionally there is mention of "Israelites" (V.28). It is the Deuteronomistic Historian who introduces the concept of "all Israel"[16] into these stories, and later into the stories of the feats of the so-called "Major Judges". See for example Jg 2:16:19 and Jg 3:7-11. Thus

14. There are four Hebrew synonyms for 'conquer' in the Book of Joshua, e.g., *laqah* (conquer) in Jos 11,23, *lakad* (capture) in Jos 10, 42, *nakah* (strike) in Jos 10, 40 and *kabesh* (subdue) in Jos 18, 1 (P).

15 Text corrected according to the context. The Hebrew text has, "since you *can* drive out the Canaanite......". See also Jg 1, 19b: "They could *not* drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had iron chariots". (Italics mine)

16 The phrase "all Israel" (*kol yisra'el*) is a theological invention of the Deuteronomist (Cf. Dt 27, 9; 29; 1; 31; 11; 32, 45).

Othniel who is not even an Israelite but a Kenizzite is made by the Deuteronomistic Historian a saviour of all Israel. In fact he seems to be engaged in his own clan's struggles with the Edomites (Jg 3:7-11). The judge Ehud is a Benjaminite engaged with his tribe's wars with Eglon, king of Moab (Jg 3:12-30). In the episode of Deborah and Barak we are expressly told that "Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali" and not all Israel (Jg 4:10). Gideon too sends messengers only to Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali (Jg 6:35). Doubtless we are told that the Ephraimites take offence that they have not been summoned to the war, but nowhere is there the question of Israel as a twelve tribe league (cf Jg 8:1-3).Jephtah too seems to be involved only in the difficulties faced by the people of Gilead (cf Jg11).Once more the Ephraimites are upset that they have not been requested to join forces against the Ammonites who were harassing Gilead (cf Jg 12:1ff.).But apparently the Gileadites were considered a part of Ephraim (cf Jg 12:4). Samson too is involved in matters concerning the tribe (*mishpahâ*) of Dan and its struggles against the Philistines (cf.Jg 13:1.25). But like Jephtah Samson too is made to have been a "judge" in all Israel (cf.Jg 12:7 and 16:20.).

3. Minor Judges

Concerning the so-called "minor judges" Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon and Abdon it is difficult to be categorical in our statements for we just have the bare names of these individuals and the information that they "delivered", that is, saved Israel or were literally "Judges" in Israel for a specific amount of time (cf.Jg 10:1-5;12:8-15). Martin Noth alludes in a footnote of his *History of Israel*, to A.Klostermann who compares the "minor judges" to the Icelandic *Gesetzsprecher* (law speaker) or "herald of the Law".[17] But the biblical text itself is so laconic that it

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17. Cf. *The History of Israel*, London 1959 reprint, p. 102, footnote 3 and *Geschichte Israels*. Gottingen 1969, 7th printing, footnote 2, p. 99. Cf. also R. Smend, *Jahwekrieg und Stammebund*, FRLANT 84, Gottingen, !966, ch 3 *Grosse und Kleine Richter*. p.34, where he too speaks of the *Gesetzessprechern* (sic). He likens their activity to a *Gesetzesvortrag*. And so we prefer "heralds of the law" rather than the literal "law speaker" of the English translation of Noth's *The History of Israel*. Albrecht Alt in his study *Die Ursprunge des Israelitischen Rechts*. (1934) reprinted in his *Kleine Schriften* I, Munich 1968, 4th edition, makes a reference to Aris *Isalendingabok* of the 12 th century A.D., and gives the original Icelandic term for the *Gesetzsprecher* as *logsogumadr*. He says it was their duty each summer to proclaim orally to the whole community a part of the Norwegian Law.

cannot support such a conclusion. In my opinion there is a closer parallel to these heralds of the law in the Levitical priests in the Book of Deuteronomy who are supposed to proclaim the Torah of Moses in the hearing of the people every seven years (cf. Dt.31:9-13), a detail also mentioned by Klostermann.

4.Song of Deborah

This song which appears in Jg 5,2-31 and the Song of Moses (Ex 15) are supposed to be the oldest pieces of literature in the Bible. And so it is to be given preference over the prose text in the Book of Judges describing the same episode (cf Jg 4,1-24).In the prose text Deborah passes on to Barak Yhwh's orders to take ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun (Jg 44:6). In v.10 where the order is reversed, Barak summons Zebulun and Naphtali! Barak himself is from Kedesh in Naphtali (v.6), whereas Deborah's seat as judge is in the highlands of Epharim (v.5). But the victory will be at the hands of a woman, Jael, a Kenite residing not far from Kedesh. What is interesting for us to note is that two tribes seem to be involved and two women that belong to neither of these. Whereas in the Song of Deborah altogether *ten* tribes are mentioned. Ephraim, Benjamin, Zebulun, Issachar and Naphtali are praised for having joined in the battle. Machir too is mentioned honourably for the same reason (Jg 5:14f.).Scholars identify Machir with Manasseh. On the other hand, the author of the poem finds fault with Reuben, Gilead (usually identified with Gad), Dan and Asher for not having taken part in the battle (Jg 5,15b-17). Now if there had been a twelve tribe amphictyony why is it that Judah and Simeon receive neither praise nor blame! Indeed why are they not mentioned at all! It is important to note that if the number "twelve" falls,then the amphictyony falls as well! Further, in the Greek amphictyonies the amphictyony would have gone on a punitive war against those who did not support it. No such thing is even mildly hinted at.

The Problem of the Central Sanctuary

Various sanctuaries are mentioned in the Books of Joshua, Judges and Samuel. Thus we find Gilgal, east of Jericho (Jos 4,19;5,9-10;10,6-15.43;14,6;ISm10,8;11,14f.;15,33),Shiloh (Jos 18,1-10;18,31;21,12.19.24;ISm 1-4), Shechem (Jos 24;IKg 12,1),Bethel (Jg 2,1-5;20,18.26;21,2) Mizpah in Gilead (Jg 11,11), Mizpah (Jg 20,Iff.;21,1-14;ISm 7,5f.;10,17), Nob (ISm 21,2-7), and Gibeon (IKg

3,4ff.). There are some stray allusions to some of these sanctuaries in the books of the Prophets as in Hosea who mentions Gilgal (Hos 4,15;9,15) Bethel/Beth-aven (Hos 4,15;6,9) Mizpah (Hos 5,1), Tabor (Hos 5,1) and Samaria (Hos 8,5-7). Amos too mentions some of these like Bethel (Am 3,14;5,5),Gilgal (Am 5,5), Beersheba (Am 5,5; 8,14), Samaria (Am 8,14) and Dan (Am 8,14).

Whether any of these ever attained the status of a central sanctuary is another question which cannot be really answered positively from the evidence available to us. For even though it was Solomon who built a central sanctuary in Jerusalem, where David had already housed the Ark (cf.2Sm 6), there is no doubt that the local sanctuaries carried on with their particular cults, no doubt in honour of Yhwh, until the time of King Josiah -- who in fact was the first to abolish the local sanctuaries in accordance with the prescriptions of Deuteronomy (cf.2Kg 22-23;Dt 12). Now from all the sanctuaries we have mentioned above it is only Gilgal, Shiloh, Shechem and Bethel that could present some claims to all-Israelite significance. But even this has to be investigated more thoroughly.

1. Gilgal

Now Gilgal situated in the territory of Benjamin was the first camping-place of the tribes that entered Canaan under the leadership of Joshua (cf Jos 4) who himself seems to have been an Ephraimite (Jos 24,29f.). It continues as a camp for quite some time (cf.Jos 9,6;10,6.15.43;14,6). Chapters 4 and 5 represent a fusion of two traditions describing the topographical aetiology of Gilgal which means "a circle of stones". The Priestly Author has given his own colouring to the narrative. A new etymology is given in view of the circumcision as Yhwh has rolled away (*galal*) the shame of Egypt from the people (cf.Jos 5,9). Another temporary camp seems to have been at Makkedah (Jos 10,21), but it never gained any importance. Gilgal did retain its importance if not for all Israel at least for the tribe of Benjamin and even for the whole of the Northern Kingdom. For it is there that Israel's first king, Saul, was anointed as king "before Yhwh" which points to a sanctuary (1Sm 11,14f). Even during the time of Amos and Hosea Gilgal continued to be an important cultic centre for the Northern Kingdom (cf.Am 5,5; Hos 4,15).

2. Shiloh

For whatever reasons the camp seems to have been shifted to Shiloh in the course of time (cf.Jos 18,1.10). Here too there seems to have been a sanctuary, for Joshua cast lots for apportioning the land "before Yhwh at Shiloh" (Jos 18,10). In fact the temple of Yahweh (*bêt yhwh*) is expressly mentioned (1Sm 1,24). The importance of Shiloh from the time of Eli and during the wars with the Philistines is too well-known to be elaborated here (cf.ISm1; 4, 1b-7,1). That the Ark was present at Shiloh cannot be doubted. Whether and in what sense Shiloh was a central sanctuary we are nowhere told. What we read is that a certain Ephraimite by the name of Elkanah used to visit the temple every year for worship and sacrifice (ISm 1,3). However the so-called Cultic Decalogue prescribes that all the menfolk of Israel are to present themselves three times a year before Yhwh (cf.Ex 34,23f). We are also told that the Ark was taken from Shiloh to the battle-field during the Philistine war at the initiative of "the elders of Israel", where it was captured by the enemy (ISm 4,1b-11). And so the question has to be posed whether the Ark really had such a central role to play in the lives of the tribes as is claimed by the champions of the amphictyony or whether it rose to significance after David had achieved his victories and had brought it to Jerusalem.

3. Shechem

We come now to Shechem whose holy place (*maqôm*) seems to have been the Diviner's Oak, where Abraham is reported to have stayed (cf Gen 12:6). Further Jacob too moves there from Bethel and there it is that he buries the foreign gods and the earrings of his followers (Gen 35,1-5). Whatever be the historical value of these traditions there is no doubt that they do show the high esteem in which Shechem was held by the Israelites. And it is precisely here that Joshua makes a covenant with Yhwh and invites other tribes to join him in accepting Yhwh as their God as he and his house have done (Jos 24,1.15). The bulk of this chapter is usually attributed to the Elohist but the hand of the Deuteronomist is also to be seen at times. In fact the introductory verse of this chapter is almost identical with that of ch.23 which is clearly of the Deuteronomist.(v.2). Here too a sanctuary (*miqdash*) and the oak are mentioned (Jos 24,26). Mount

Gerizim (and Mount Ebal)[18] are mentioned in three deuteronomistic texts (Jos 8,30-35;Dt.11,26-32;27,4-13). All these three texts obviously either implicitly or explicitly presuppose the presence of all Israel, the last one even names the twelve tribes. And the altar of undressed stones for holocausts and communion sacrifices is mentioned in the last two texts. The Law or "the Way" are also mentioned in all three texts, clearly implying the Law of Deuteronomy in some original form. The Ark is mentioned only in Jos 8,33 but the whole section Jos 8,30-35 belongs to a late Deuteronomist and seems to be "floating" as it is placed after Jos 9,2 in the LXX. Once again the evidence is not unimpeachable. Martin Noth assumes that Shechem was a central sanctuary and that the Ark was moved from there to Bethel after the destruction of Shechem by Abimelech (cf Jg 9,45). He justifies this by saying that the Ark was a *Wanderheiligtum* (travelling shrine) and connects this with the pilgrimage of Jacob from Shechem to Bethel (cf Gen 35,1-8) as interpreted by Albrecht Alt.[19] There is a reference to the Ark on Mount Gerizim in the Book of Joshua (cf Jos 8,33),which is assumed to be the same as Shechem by those postulating a central sanctuary there. Shechem surely was a most important sanctuary for Israel but nowhere are we told that it was a central sanctuary.

4.Bethel

Now the question of the presence of Ark at Bethel has to be examined a little more closely. Like Shechem Bethel too was a most revered sanctuary with its ancient associations with the patriarch Jacob (cf.Gen 28,10-22; 35,1-15). And even in the time of the Settlement it was a popular sanctuary (Jg 2,1-5;20,18-28). No wonder Jeroboam I tried to displace Jerusalem in favour of Bethel (IKg 12) and during the time of Amos Amaziah the priest officiating there in the name of Jeroboam II stated that it was a royal sanctuary (Am 7,13). In the Book of Judges we are told that the Israelites consulted Yhwh

18 Since the Samaritans had built their Temple on Mount Gerizim some time during the fourth century B.C., at the time of Alexander the Great, it is not impossible that a Jewish scribe might have inserted "Mount Ebal" where originally "Mount Gerizim" had stood. Thus we have Mount Ebal in Dt 27,4 where the Samaritan Pentateuch has Mount Gerizim. And this makes better sense since Dt 27, 12 has the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

19. See his study *Die Wallfahrt von Sichem nach Bethel* (1938) reprinted in his *Kleine Schriften* 1, Munich 1968, 4th edition, pp. 79-88.

at Bethel and wept in his presence (Jg 20,26) apparently at the Oak of Tears (cf.Gen 35,8) or at the place called Bochim or Weepers (cf Jg 2,4f.). Now v.27b-28a which says, "The ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas son of Eliezer son of Aaron was the priest who ministered at it at that time", disturbs the narrative and is to be considered as a late gloss.[20] And so the basis for assuming that the Ark was there is quite flimsy.

As a concluding remark one could ask the question whether, if indeed the Ark was such a central shrine of paramount importance for all Israel, why was it left undisturbed and ignored in the house of a certain Abinadab of Kiriath-Jearim for a period of twenty years, since the people of Bethshemesh were unwilling to keep it in their area (ISm 6:20-7,2).

The Amphictyony in Canaan: a Mirage

We can now sum up the evidence or the lack of it for an amphictyony in ancient Israel. It has become clear that the Yahwistic Narrative and the Yehovistic Fusion have as their starting-point the monarchy in Israel.And so there is a retrojection of an all-Israelite perspective in the description of the Exodus, the Conquest or the Settlement and even right from the beginning. The structure of Israel subdivided into twelve tribes is a retrojection of the Priestly Authors. There is a high degree of historical probability that only a small group of dissatisfied elements left Egypt and managed in the course of time to settle down in various areas of Canaan specially in the mountainous areas since they could not overpower the inhabitants of the land who dwelt in walled cities and used iron weapons and chariots. The settlement in Canaan was by no means a unified concerted effort to conquer the whole land as portrayed in the Book of Joshua. It looks as if the historical situation is reflected more faithfully in the Book of Judges. These groups slowly banded together into clans and later on into tribes for mutual support and protection specially under pressure of external threat. An added element here was the faith in Yhwh, the God of the groups who had experienced his protection either in Egypt or during the Desert Wandering period or both. This is reflected in the last chapter of the Book of Joshua (cf.Jos 24).

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20 . See R. Smend, *op. cit.,* p. 68 who calls the verse "a late gloss" (*dieser spaten Glosse*) and a little later "secondary" *(sekundar).*

There is no historical basis for postulating a central sanctuary for all the tribes and far less for the Ark as being housed in the various sanctuaries at different periods. And there is absolutely no evidence anywhere to say that every month one tribe looked after the central shrine. The appeal to the Ark as a *Wanderheiligtum* helps only to save embarrassment! Further there is no historical record anywhere in the historical books of a covenant renewal at the feast of Tabernacles but only an allusion to it in the Book of Deuteronomy (Dt 31,9-13).

Again as M.C.Astour[21] has pointed out, the *nesi'îm,* who were appointed by Moses, (Num 1,2-17) do not correspond to the Delphic *heriomnemones* who were elected representatives. Their functions too are quite different. The latter controlled the finances and the property of the temple and the *pylagorai* (no parallel in the Old Testament for such an elected representative council) decided on matters of common interest. Further except for a stray mention of Solomon as God's *nasî* (IKg 11,34) this term is not to be found in the Historical Books except in the Priestly Author. And in Ezekiel in his apocalyptic vision for the future (cf.Ez 40-48) there is room for only one *nasî'* and not twelve. One can therefore safely conclude that the Ancient Israelite amphictyony rests on very flimsy evidence and seems to be nothing more than a pure postulate with no foundation in the biblical texts.

The Tribal League: Israel's Need of the Hour

What has been denied in the previous section is not that families banded together into clans, clans into tribes, and tribes into some sort of federation for the sake of mutual support and defence in the area of ancient Canaan in which they found themselves to be strangers, and of an inferior level of civilisation. What has been rejected is that the league was an amphictyony, i.e., a sacral league of precisely twelve tribes after the fashion of the Etruscan, Delphic or Pylaic amphictyonies, with a common central sanctuary whose care was taken in rotation every month by one tribe. Martin Noth's theory however has contributed immensely to our understanding of the early history of ancient Israel as well as of its earlier religious literature and of the complicated and complex process that led finally to the

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21. See his article "Amphictyony" in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* Suppl. vol., Abingdon, Nashville, 1976, pp.23-25.

institution of the monarchy in Israel. A number of postulates have had to be abandoned and a good many of our ideas have as a result become more focussed.

It will now be our task to scrutinise whatever evidence the Bible offers us to show that there was some sort of a tribal league in ancient Canaan which came to be known as Israel. Starting from the name "Israel" itself, this seems to be a self-revelatory concept meaning "God reigns" thus pointing to some sort of a theocracy. No wonder that the most ancient hymn, known variously as the Song of Moses, The Song of Miriam or the Song of the Sea of Reeds (Ex 15) explicitly states, "Yhwh reigns for ever and ever" (V.18). Gideon's refusal to accept the kingship (Jg 8,22f) and the anti-monarchical sections of the Book of Samuel (ISm 8,11-22;10,17-24) seem to point in the same direction. Joshua's covenant at Shechem and his invitation to the other clans or tribes to accept Yhwh's overlordship confirm the same (Jos 24).

Further the covenant at Shechem implies a code of conduct and not merely a distinct form of worship or a different God. Joshua lays down "a statue and an ordinance" for the people (Jos 24,25). Theories have been propounded and the Book of the Covenant (Ex 20,22-23,33) has been identified with this. Whatever be the facts one thing is clear from the Historical Books viz., that Israel from the beginning seems to have accepted a definite ethos in her social, political and religious life. Thus for example the shameful behaviour of the Benjaminites at Gibeah who had violated the rules of hospitality and criminally gang raped the Levite's associate wife to death (cf.Jg 19-20) are termed *benê beliyya'al* (Jg. 19,22;20,13), scoundrels or worthless fellows who are accused of *nebalâ*, infamy (Jg 19,23f) or again of *zimmâ unebalâ* (disgrace and infamy), and that too "in Israel" (Jg 20,7.10). The prophet Jeremiah refers to adultery with the same term (Jr 29,23). And the brothers of Dinah also refer to her rape by the Hivite Shechem, son of Hamor, as *nebalâ* (Gen 34,7). Quite similar is the case of the violation of Tamar by Ammon. She rejects the offer of her half-brother in these terms: No my brother, do not violate me! This is not a thing men do in Israel. Do not commit such a *nebalâ* (outrage). Wherever should I go bearing my shame? While you would become an outcast (*'ehad hannebalîm*) in Israel". (2Sm 13,12f.).

Let us come back to the narrative in the Book of Judges. Israel, that is , the whole community of the tribes cannot overlook the crime of the men of Gibeah. It must be rooted out (*neba'arâ*) from her midst (Jg

20,13). We are reminded of the so-called *"bi'arta* laws"[22] (you shall banish this evil from your midst/Israel) from the later Code of Deuteronomy, all of which imply capital punishment by stoning. The concept of *ne̲'balâ*, "infamy", also appears in this Code with regard to the shameful conduct of a virgin (Dt.22,20).

At this juncture it must be stated that the clearest trace of an amphictyonic procedure is the way the rest of the tribes carry out a punitive war against the erring tribe of Benjamin. It is perhaps the only case of this type in the Bible. The appeal of the Levite who cuts the dead body of his associate wife and sends one piece to each of the twelve tribes requesting for justice, is made under the presupposition that "Israel" exists. However the whole community congregates at Mizpah to deliberate on their course of action. This sanctuary has not been claimed as a central sanctuary by any of the supporters of the amphictyony. The inclusion of Bethel into the narrative (Jg 20,18,26;21,2) is a later addition as Martin Noth himself acknowledges.[23]

That some sort of a federation of tribes under the banner of Yhwh did exist in ancient Israel is also corroborated by the following. The Song of Deborah refers to "Israel" nine times; Once Israel is called "Yhwh's people", and twice Yhwh is called "the God of Israel". The curse on Meroz by Yhwh's angel for not having taken part in the war,and the blame laid on Reuben, Gilead, Dan and Asher points in the same direction. Obviously there is here no question of a twelve tribe league as Judah and Simeon are missing.

Further when the pressure of the Ammonites grows heavy on the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead how is it possible for Saul to send messengers to the whole territory of Israel threatening with death any one who would refuse to join in the war against Nahash, the king of the Ammonites (ISm11). And again it is difficult to explain how later on Saul could be anointed as king over Israel by Samuel unless there had

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22. The phrase is from J. L 'Hour, "Une legislation criminelle dans le Deuteronome", *Bibl* 44 (1963) pp.1-28, spec. p.3. The following *bi'arta* laws, Dt 13,6; 17,7.12; 19,19;21,21; 22,21.22.24; 24,7 are enumerated on p.4, footnote 1.

23. Cf. *Das System der Zwolf Stamme Israels*. (See footnote 1), Excursus IV, *Literarische Analyse von Ri 19-21*, p. 166, where he states, "Durch V. 18 aber is uberhaupt erst Bethel in dieses Kapitel hineingekommen.... Naturlich handelt es sich in v. 23 und 26 um Mispa...."

been some sort of a federation among the various tribes. How else would the members of the other tribes accept a Benjaminite to rule over them? The same thing applies to the fact that after the death of Saul, Saul's commander-in-chief is able to make a proposal to David who had already been anointed king of Judah (2Sm 2:1-4) to accept to rule over Israel as well? (2Sm 3:12-21).

And finally a word about the lists of the twelve tribes that are found in the Bible. There is no need to waste time on the list in the Book of Ezekiel (Ez 48) which is clearly an apocalyptic vision for the future. Nor can it be proved, given the information available to us so far, that the lists in the Priestly Authors have any historical value in the contexts in which they are now found. The list in Gen 49 can at most go back to the time of king David as it is a clear legitimization of Judah's supremacy in Israel (cf.v.10). And the list in Dt 33 is later. Obviously the oracle on Judah reflects the exilic situation!(Dt 33:7). The evidence Martin Noth summons to prove that the list in Num 1,15-16 is from the time of the settlement is not conclusive.[24]

The clearest proof we have for the number twelve is in IKg 4,7-19 where we are told that "Solomon had twelve administrators (*nissabîm*) for the whole of Israel who saw to the provisioning of the king and his household; each had to provide for one month in the year"(v.7). Curiously enough the districts do not correspond to the area of the twelve tribes, except for Ephraim (v.8), Naphtali, Asher, Issachar, Ben-jamin and Gad (vv.15-19). The district of "the Encampments of Jair" (v.13) is connected with Manasseh and Gilead but the name of the district is not that of the tribe of Manasseh. The rest of the districts seem to comprise of Canaanite territories or cities. Now, was Solomon trying to break the old tribal federation whose continuance could have been a threat to the monarchy or was he trying to integrate the Canaanites as constituent parts of his kingdom? No definite answer can be given to this question. The same situation reigns also in the list of the territorial allotment to the twelve tribes in the Book of Joshua.

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24. Cf. D. Kellermann, *op. cit.*, Excursus 1, *Die Personennamen Num 1, 5b-15.* pp. 155-159, where he shows that though the majority of the personal names belong to the time of the Settlement a number of them seem to be post-exilic. See also M. Noth's *Das System* (footnote 1), Excursus III, *Gebrauch und Bedeutung des Wrotes nasi'*, pp.151-162, as well his book *Die Israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der gemeinsemitischen Namengebung*, Stuttgart, 1928.

These too include Canaanite areas and towns (cf.Jos 14-19). The study of Albrecht Alt however has shown that the system of the tribal boundaries here reflects the historical situation between the Conquest (*Landnahme*) and the formation of the Israelite States and rather at the end than at the beginning of this period.[25]Consequently Solomon is not inventing but rather modifying and transforming an existing system to use it for his administrative districts. In other words the ancient tribal league of Israel served as a stepping-stone for the Monarchy!

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25. Cf. *"Das System der Stammesgrenzen im Buch Josua"*, (1927), reprinted in his *Kleine Schriften* I, (See footnote 17), pp. 193-202.

Anti-Greed and Anti-Pride
Mark 10:17-27 & 10:35-45 in the Light of Tribal values

A tribal ethos based on the values of anti-greed and anti-pride offers a valuable alternative model for India today which is being devastated by the greed of consumerism and the pride of caste. This ethos is in tune with the ethos of the Bible, and in particular with the ethos of Jesus, who as the founder of a renewal movement working for the eschatological restoration of Israel radicalizes the tribal ethos of the Bible. A study of two texts from Mark, the story of the Call of the Rich Young Man in Mk 10:17-27 and of the Ambitious Request of the Sons of Zebedee in Mk10:35-45 shows how Jesus proposes anti-greed and anti-pride (understood as the renunciation of possessions and the willingness to serve) as essential elements of his way. These attitudes are required of all the followers of Jesus and not just of a radical elite; and they are proposed not merely as dispositions to be cultivated by individuals but as the structuring principles of the end time community Jesus intends to found.

One of the striking contradictions to be observed in India today is the astonishing difference between its political system, borrowed from the West, and its indigenous social structure. Politically India is a parliamentary democracy. Its government is based on the assumption of the equality of every citizen, who is guaranteed his or her fundamental rights. Socially India is predominantly a caste society. It is a hierarchical order of essentially unequal interdependent people, held together by a system of mutually interlocking duties (*Kula-jati dharma*), rather than a collection of autonomous individuals safeguarded by universal rights. The political system of India does not grow out of its dominant religious ethos, but stands in marked

opposition to it.[1]

The two systems, political and social (parliamentary democracy on the one hand and caste on the other), have existed together in an uneasy tension ever since India became an independent nation state nearly half a century ago. It was then hoped that the first of these (parliamentary democracy) would lead to the gradual disappearance of the second (caste). Political democracy and the increasing 'modernization' of India, it was hoped, would result in growing egalitarian social attitudes, which would lead to the death of caste. This has not happened. If anything it is caste (stronger than ever) which threatens to swallow up parliamentary democracy, and has already influenced its working to such an extent that all politics today are caste politics.

The tension between the two systems has flared up occasionally in outbursts of caste and communal violence; for both caste and communal conflicts can, I suggest, be interpreted as reactions of traditional India to democratic, secular modernity. Caste atrocities are engendered by reactions of caste Hinduism to the threatened emancipation of the lower castes by parliamentary democracy; and communal attitudes are the defensive response of religious Hinduism to the threat of 'secularism'. These reactions are now surfacing into open conflict as 'secularists' defending the ideal of modern Western secular and democratic society, confront 'fundamentalists', who, whatever lip service they may pay to democracy and human rights, are in fact clamouring for a political system that will give expression to the hierarchical order of caste. An autocracy based on caste, it seems to me, is as necessary an outcome of *Hindutva as* a theocracy based on the *Shariat* is always the outcome of Muslim fundamentalism. Ultimately, either democracy with its *homo aequalis* or caste and its *homo hierarchicus* must prevail.

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1. Note Dumont's perceptive comment: "On the whole, the essential form of the system [of caste] is of a hierarchical polarity. One might say that India has institutionalised inequality just as we [the West] are trying to do the same with equality. In the relation of two men, modern western society presupposes equality to the point that delicate situations are likely to arise where subordination is necessary. India on the contrary emphasises inequality to the point that situations tending to equality are unstable and conflict is called for to solve them. — Louis Dumont, "For a Sociology of India", *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 1 (1957) 7-22 [18].

1. The Significance of Tribal Values

In this critical situation, it is heartening to remember that the notion of an egalitarian society is not wholly foreign to India. It is part of the self-consciousness of the 60 million of its tribal peoples (one seventh of its total population), whose identity is marked by their rootedness in land, and by the egalitarian social structure which derives from this. As Bosu Mullick comments in a splendid discussion of the identity of the indigenous peoples of India:

> The ideology of the indigenous peoples in India which has held them together till today has been based on their concept of regarding the earth as Mother, their symbiotic relationship with the environment and the animal kingdom; it has been rooted in their egalitarian principle of social system, and their sense of balance in man-woman relationship and their respective social rights. Where there has been a deviation from this anchor of social ideology the people has been in the losing end. The quest of survival of the indigenous peoples demands a journey to the roots of this social ideology.[2]

Tribe and caste thus confront each other as two contrasting social systems both of which are indigenous to India; while the egalitarian liberalism which animates the political but not the social life of the so called elite is not. This last is, in fact, an imported ideology, far more precarious than is generally supposed. Not only is its influence restricted to the `convent-educated' middle classes (the products of British Empire and Christian Mission), but it is (even in these classes) skin deep. There can be little commitment to liberty, equality, and fraternity (the basis of liberal democracy) among people who experience others,and spontaneously react to them, as members of a graded caste hierarchy. So if parliamentary democracy has survived in India till now, it is not because of the secular liberalism of the middle classes (never an adequate and now a rapidly diminishing resource), but because of the inertia of an inherited post-colonial political system; and because inter-caste tensions between competing castes, and now a massive organized reaction of the lower castes against the domination of the upper castes, has prevented any dominant group emerging. Should such a group emerge, even under a saffron flag, and sporting a manifesto that spells the end of secular democracy,

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2. S. Bosu Mullick, Edwin Jaydas, Anto Akkara & Anita Jaydas, *Indigenous Identity: Crisis and Reawakening*. Delhi: Navin Prakashan Kendra (ISPCK), 1993, pp.8-9.

'liberal' middle class India will,I suspect, have little difficulty in transferring its allegiance to it, provided it is assured of adequate supplies of Coca-Cola and Johny Walker. For what has struck deep into the hearts of convent-educated India is Western consumerism, not Western liberalism.

The future of democracy and the values that it enshrines will depend, then, not on the liberalism of the middle class 'elite', whose ideological loyalties are quite inconstant and largely selfish, but on the growing awareness of the *bahujan* ('masses') that their future does not lie in perpetuating a caste system, which, for all the praise sometimes lavished on it by well-meaning Christian apologists,has not, as far as our experience goes, proved anything but oppressive and dehumanizing to the great majority of India's people. As the *bahujan* have begun to realize, the way to liberation does not lie in a return to stagnant immobility of a caste society,but in a movement forward to more egalitarian models, however 'western' these may be. The hope of a more just society lies here. It is *mandal* that will prove the best bulwark against *mandir* and all that it implies.

It is here that the awakening tribal peoples become significant. They bring a new element to India's political and religious conscious-ness: an indigenous experience of an egalitarian society. More importantly the egalitarian order of tribal society is rooted in basic values which Paulus Kullu in his article on Tribal Religion and Culture in this issue of *Jeevadhara* has identified as 'anti-greed' and `anti-pride'. "For tribals", he writes, "greed and pride are the capital 'original' sins, because according to their creation myth, these were the sins which caused the mythical flood and the rain of fire, which are the symbols of death and destructions."[3] Tribal values thus stand in sharp contrast to the 'pride' of the caste and the 'greed' of consumerism which largely determine the social oppression and economic exploitation, that define the brutal reality of Indian society today. The cultivation of these values is essential if Indian society is to be renewed.

Significantly, these values are precisely those which are given a significant place in the ethical teachings of Jesus. They are conspic-uous gospel values whose biblical form and basis this article will explore. It will do this by examining (1) the rootedness of these values in the ethos of the Bible (§2) and (2) their formulation in the teaching of Jesus (§3).

3. Paulus Kullu, "Tribal Religion and Culture", in this issue pp.89-109

2. Tribal Values in the Bible

The values which undergird the ethos of tribal society are strikingly similar to those taught in the Bible. For the basic ethos of the Bible is that of a tribe.[4] 'Israel' began as a confederation of tribes, whose socio-political egalitarianism stood in sharp contrast to the hierarchical centralized rule of the Canaanite city states, which Israel eventually overwhelmed, either through conquest or peaceful immigration or popular revolt.[5] The social organization of Israel (whether inherited

4. The problems of applying the anthropological notion of 'tribe' (itself a highly ambiguous term) to the 'triibes' of the Bible is discussed in J.W. Rogerson, *Anthropology of the Old Testament.* Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984, pp.86-101. In spite of all ambiguities, the designation remains a convenient one. This 'predefinitional' term needs no doubt to be sharpened, but it does describe a basic culture common to groups widely separated in space and time. Robert Parkin, *The Munda of Central India, an Account of their Social Organization,* Delhi: OUP: 1992, p. 12, has shown how "most of the tribes of central India regardless of language, have systems of affinal alliance (cross cousin marriage) very similar to similar systems existing outside India - in South East Asia, ancient China, Australia, the Amazon Basin and parts of Oceania, some of which bear a very detailed resemblance to what is found in central India. Since these areas are sufficiently isolated to rule out historical contacts, these similarities can only be the result of more fundamental structural properties common to all". It makes sense. then, to speak of a tribal culture, spread over space and time, even though awareness of the fuziness of the term will make us wary of hasty comparisons.

5 .Traditionally the settlement of Israel has been understood as the conquest of Canaan by "all Israel" in a lightening campaign under Joshua (Josh 1-12). Discrepancies in the biblical narrative itself (Josh 13-19; Jdg 1), as well as conflicting archeological evidence, make this account of Israel's origins unlikely. Instead the settlement, it has been suggested, may have taken place either by piecemeal conquest by various groups entering Canaan from different directions over a long space of time (Albright, Wright, Bright), or (2) through the peaceful sedenterization of semi-nomadic tribes in the uninhabited highlands of Palestine (Alt, Noth, Weippert); or (3) through the revolt of the Canaanite peasantry against the military aristocracy of the city states, which controlled and taxed them, under the influence of a numerically small but ideological powerful group of under Moses, which had escaped from Egypt and brought with them the cult of liberating God (Yhwh) and the blue print of a new community (the Sinai covenant) which served to catalyse the revolt (Mendenhall, Gottwald). `Israel' as a federation of tribes certainly did not exist before the settlement. Whether it was formed by the merging of nomadic or semi nomadic tribes who had entered Canaan from outside, or was the result of a process of `retribalisation' through which the revolting peasants of Canaan created an egalitarian order in contrast to that of the City states they had overwhelmed, will depend on the theory of Israel's origins that one follows — cf. Marvin Chaney, "Ancient Palestinian Peasant Movements and the Formation of Premonarchic Israel", in David N. Freedman and David F.Graf (eds.), *Palestine in Transition: The Emergence of Ancient Israel.* Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983, pp. 39-89; Norman Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985, pp. 261-88.

from its nomadic past or consciously built up by revolting 'peasants' reacting to the oppressive system of the city states from which they had freed themselves) has been well described by Gottwald as "a self governing association of self-sufficient free farmers and herdsmen constituting a single class of peoples with a common ownership of the means of production vested in large families."[6]

This egalitarian, anti-greed, and anti-pride social order was sustained by Israel's unique religion, in which a single God, Yhwh, "while conceived as the sole sovereign of the land in which Israel lived, was not defined primarily with reference to place, either land as a totality or particular locations within it but with reference to his rule over a people"[7]. Unlike the localized Gods of the Canaanite city states with their highly consumptive cults and their powerful priesthood, Yhwh, whose cult was relatively non consumptive of community resources and whose priesthood was without political power, did not legitimize a pyramidal social system apexing in a divine king, but guaranteed a community of equals. Yhwh's ownership of the land (the land is the Lord's) inhibited the differential accumulation of wealth that is the result of unrestricted "private property". Yhwh's absolute Lordship over his people prevented the emergence of totalitarian rulers, exercising absolute power. Yhwh's exclusive uniqueness as the one sole God of all Israel kept the community of socio-political equals together. As Gottwald has described it:

> The loosely federated egalitarian tribalism of Israel was symbolized and institutionalized at the most comprehensive level by a common cultic-ideological allegiance to mono-Yahwism....Yahwism as a social force was operative at precisely those critical points of common structural interest where the monarchic and aristocratic institutions of the Near East normally functioned to give hierarchic order and cohesion to societies - at the cost, however, of an enormous repression of human energies and values in the larger part of the populace. It was precisely social order achieved by human repression that Israel strove to resist at all costs and over against which it hoped to build an alternative social order that would be functional for the whole of the people.[8]

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6. Norman Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.* NY: Orbis, 1979, p.613.

7. Ibid, 614

8. Ibid, 615-16.

Israel's egalitarian social order was thus integrally related (in a relation of mutual interdependence) to its religion, with its absolute primacy of Yhwh, its concern for the weaker members of the tribe, and its aversion to the accumulation of wealth and the exercise of arbitrary power. That is why even when social and economic pressures (the threat of the Philistines, the need to manage a more sophisticated economy) led to the replacement of the federation of tribes by a monarchy,[9] Israel remained essentially different from the kingdoms around. It was leavened by elements of tribal egalitarianism and a concern for the weak members of the tribe; and was continually challenged by a prophetic tradition which drew its inspiration from the egalitarian ethos of tribal Israel. The close connection between Yahweh and the egalitarian structure of Israel as mutually dependent variables in the social structure of Israel, shows itself in the twin prophetic condemnations of idolatry and injustice. For Israel's prophets these were closely linked. Forsaking Yhwh led to injustice; practising injustice meant to forsake Yhwh. Yhwh continues, even during the monarchy, to be the sole owner of the land and the sole Lord of his people. Because of this absolute role of Yhwh, the king in Israel never enjoyed the divine prerogatives of his peers in Egypt, Assyria or Babylon. The Lordship of Yhwh inhibited exaggerated development of royal pretensions, and to an extent prevented massive accumulation of wealth. Tribal values continue to flourish in post-tribal Israel.

3. Tribal Values in the Teaching of Jesus

Such tribal values underlie I believe much of the ethical teaching of Jesus too. Jesus sees himself as standing within the prophetic tradition of Israel (Mk 6:4; Lk 13:33), and calls for the kind of religious and social renewal of his people that the prophets sought.[10] He too looked forward to an egalitarian community made up of people free from self-assertion and   from greed. The kind of counter-culture envisioned by Jesus, it has been said, articulates the counter-cultural vision of peasant groups in pre-industrial agrarian societies every-

9. On the emergence of the monarchy see *Semeia* 37 (1986) which has an excellent collection of articles on the sociological factors responsible for the rise of the Israelite monarchy.

10. Marcus Borg, *Jesus A New Vision: Spirit, Culture and the Life of Discipleship,* San Francisco: Harper: 1987, 150-71.

where. For here "those who find themselves at the bottom of the social heap develop cultural forms which promise them dignity, respect and economic comfort which they lack in the world as it is. A real pattern of exploitation dialectically produces its own symbolic mirror image within a folk culture " [11].Such counter cultures, which are "strikingly uniform" in a wide variety of little traditions in different parts of the world, has been described (at the admitted risk of oversimplification) as nearly always implying "a society of brotherhood in which there will be no rich and poor, in which no distinctions of rank and status (save those between believers and non believers) will exist"[12].They imply, that is, an egalitarian, anti-greed and anti-pride society.

Peasant utopias like these do indeed come close to the kind of counter culture envisaged by Jesus. But Jesus brings something radically new. A new experience of God, which allows him to re-name Yhwh as *abba*, leads to a radically new understanding of God and of society, that is to a new type of religion and a new form of politics. God is experienced not so much as `holy' but as gracious and compassionate; [13] and people are experienced not just as members of an exclusive tribe, or a separated 'clean' caste, but as members of an open family, marked by a freedom from consumerism and an attitude of radical service.

This new understanding of God and of society, does not negate Israel's 'tribal' understanding of itself, but universalizes and radicalizes it. Israel's egalitarian social order and its legislation to maintain this (the prohibition of the sale of land outside the family, or the taking of interest on loans, regulations for the limitation of debtor-servitude and for the relief of the poverty stricken) was restricted to Israel only. It did not apply to the gentiles, the 'outsiders' who did not belong to the 'tribe' (Lev 19:117-18; Deut). The concerns of Jesus reach out to all humankind. Israel's anti-greed and anti-pride was expressed in legislation and social protest which sought to control (without great success) the accumulation of private property (Dt 15, Is 5, Mic 2) and to prevent the setting up of a rigid hierarchy of status. Jesus called for a radical dispossession of goods (Mk 1:16-20; 10:17-23) and for a

11 James C. Scott, "Protest and Profanation: Agrarian Revolt and the Little Tradition", *Theory and Society* 4 (1977) 1-38; 211-246 [224] quoted in John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: the Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant.* Edinburgh: Clark, 1991, p. 263.

12. Ibid, 225.

13. Borg (n. 10 above) 129-49.

radical attitude of service (Mk 10: 42-45). The values of tribal society, its egalitarian acceptance of persons, its attitudes of anti-greed, and anti-pride, are thus brought to new levels of radicality in the teaching of Jesus as bonds of tribal and covenant loyalty are replaced by the bonds of agapeic love, and the solidarity of all humankind in Adam is restored at wholly new level by the New Adam!

This is illustrated by several passages in the gospels which describe the basic attitudes that must structure the community of his followers. I propose to reflect on two such passages from the gospel of Mark, the story of the Rich Young Man in Mk 10: 17-27 and that of the request of the Sons of Zebedee in Mk 10:35-45. Both passages are found in the section of the gospel in which Jesus describes his 'way' of discipleship, contrasting it with other ways. They pinpoint two radical values of that way which correspond closely to the anti-greed and the anti-pride attitudes that structure tribal society.

A. Anti-Greed:
The Call of the Rich Young Man (Mk 10:17-27)
Mk 10:17-23

V. 17   As Jesus was setting out on his journey, a man ran up, fell on his knees before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

V.18   And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

V.19   You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honour your father and your mother.

V.20   And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept since I was a boy."

V.21   And Jesus looking at him loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing.
Go, sell everything you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

V.22   At this word the man's face fell; and he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

For us who live in a society where conspicuous consumption is a sign of status (hence our extravagant celebrations of weddings, and

ordinations to the priesthood), and is believed to be the source of all well being, Mark's story of the Rich Young Man can be a profoundly disturbing text.[14] It is the only story in the gospels where a call of Jesus is refused, and where the cause of the refusal is noted quite precisely as the reluctance of the person called to give up his material possessions. The man who comes with such eagerness to learn about how to attain *moksha* and who greets Jesus as his *guru* with such profound respect ("a man ran up to him, fell on his knees before him and said: `Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal Life"), goes away sadly when invited by Jesus to sell his property and follow him ("at this word, the man's face fell, and he went away sad, because he had great wealth").

The contrast between the enthusiastic arrival of the man, who breaks into the story with verve ("a man *ran up* to him') and his dismal exit ("he went away sad') is heightened by the extraordinary qualities (presumably) the young man reveals. He is no prodigal son `squandering his wealth in wild living' (Lk 15:13). He has kept the commandments, and specifically those pertaining to interhuman justice ("all these I have kept since I was a boy'). [15] He aspires to something more. He is obviously what vocation promoters of religious congregations today would call an 'ideal vocation'. Jesus certainly seems to think so. He looks at him, we are told, and loves him (V.21), that is, gives him a sign of his affection, the only time Jesus is said to do this in the gospel of Mark.[16] The sign of love is to prepare the young man for the jolting words which follow. For now Jesus quite unexpectedly invites this highly rich, well behaved, respectable young man to sell all he has and join his disreputable band of itinerant disciples: "One thing you lack. Go, sell everything you have and give it to the poor...then come, follow me" (V.22).

14 . Drewermann, *Das Markus Evangelium, Teil 2.* Olten: Walter Verlag, 1990, p. 115.
15 . The order in which the commandments are cited varies in the manuscript tradition Some mss follow the order of the Decalogue in the Masoretic text; others that in the LXX. The "Do not defraud' (*me apostereses*) is not found in any version of the decalogue. It may sum the demands of the ninth and tenth commandments, or it may as Gnilka suggests be an allusion to Sir 4: 1 which forbids us to "defraud" the poor of their living, that is the poor labourers of their just wages — Joachim Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus Teil 2.* Zurich: Benziger, 1979, p.87.
16. Cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993, p. 554; Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium.* Teil 2. Freiburg: Herder [HtKNT], 1977, p. 140.

In doing this, Jesus, as Fernando Belo points out, offers the young man "a messianic reading of his practice". That is, he evaluates his conduct in the light of the Kingdom.[17] Here, the ethic of the law he has been following is found to be inadequate. Whatever he may possess (in terms of material goods or moral merit), he lacks one thing, the freedom which comes to those who have experienced that God is good (10:18). To experience this he must give all that he has to the poor (who lack this!) and follow Jesus.[18]

But the young man's attachment to his possessions proves too much for this. Unlike the first disciples called by Jesus, who promptly leave their possessions, or their family, and follow Jesus (Mk 1:18-20), the young man we are told, "goes away sadly, because he had great wealth" (V.22). He cannot follow Jesus because he is unable to part with his possessions and break with his situation of social status and economic security. But such a radical break is essential for following Jesus. "Leaving"/"following" are the dialectically related negative and positive moments of the appropriate response to every call to follow Jesus. For Jesus summons us out of our parochial loyalties to family, clan, tribe or nation into the new "family of God", and invites us to leave the security offered by wealth, status or achievement to trust solely in God's providential care.

This risk the young man is unable to take. His inability comes from his attachment to money and the comfort, status and security it brings. Like our consumerism today this attachment must not be seen mereluy as an unfortunate personal disposition . It is the outcome of a system which has instilled and which continues to nourish it. As Belo puts it: "the dominant codes (his society - and of ours!) have gained the upper hand over him."[19]

The story, then, climaxes in the invitation of Jesus (10:21), which breaks suddenly and sharply into the secure world of this well-intentioned young man, revealing its flawed fragility. "One thing you lack. Go sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come follow me" (V.21)[20] . This saying,

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17 . Fernando Belo, *A Materialistic Reading of the Gospel of Mark*: NY: Orbis, 1982, p. 172.
18 Belo, (Ibid, 172) draws attention to the structural oppositions in the story: You *lack* one thing/whatever you *have* - the poor *lack*/whatever you *have* (give to them).
19 Ibid.
20 As Gnilka (n. 15 above) 84, points out Mk 10: 17-21 is a pronouncement story in form, and v.21 is its climactic saying.

which certainly expresses the mind of Jesus, even if it may not go back to him in its present form,[21] links the following of Jesus to the renunciation of material possessions. There is no doubt that the immediate disciples of Jesus (like those of the Buddha) took this quite literally. They accompanied their master as itinerant teachers and healers: homeless (Lk 9:58), unattached to any family (Mk 3:31-35; Lk 9:59-62), unburdened by any possessions (Mt 10:9-10), disdaining the protection of even sandals and staff (Mt 10:10). According to the widely accepted thesis of Gerd Theissen, "wandering charismatics" like these first disciples of Jesus, supported by small communities of local sympathizers, continued to be the mainstay of early Christianity long after the death of Jesus.[22] Until the emergence of the Hellenistic urban communities, which gradually took over the movement towards the end of the first century, early Christianity (and specially early Palestinian Christianity) was primarily a movement of "wandering charismatics". And it was among these first itinerant preachers of christianity, Theissen suggests, that sayings of Jesus (like the one in Mark's story) which call for a radical renunciation of home and possessions, found their appropriate setting.[23] Such drastic sayings were addressed to and preserved by the wandering charismatics and

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21 For a good discussion of the tradition history of the passage see Pesch, (n. 16 above) 142.

22 Gerd Theissen, *The First Followers of Jesus. A Sociological Analysis of the Earliest Christianity.* London: SCM, 1978, pp. 1-14. Though Theissen's theory has found such widespread agreement among scholars that it is almost a consensus position today, it has been critiqued (1) for its exegesis by wolfgang Stegemann, "Vagabond Radicalism in Early Christianity? A Historical and Theological Discussion of a Thesis Proposed by Gerd Theissen", in W. Schottroff & W. Stegemann (eds.), *God of the Lowly: Socio-Historical Interpretations of the Bible.* NY: Orbis 1984, pp. 148-68; and (2) for its sociology by Thomas Schmeller, *Brechungen. Urchristliche Wandercharismatiker im Prisma soziologisch orientierter Exegese* [SBS 136]. Stuttgart: KBW, 1989. Stegemann rightly points to the absence of serious source-critical analyses in Theissen's use of gospel texts. In fact the "cynic' interpretation of the Jesus movement he offers comes from sayings that do not go back to Jesus, but reflect the interpretation of evangelists, specially Luke. Schmeller notes that the wandering charismatics were much more varied in their function than Theissen makes them out to be, and exercised a much smaller role in the post-Easter church than Theissen imagines. Both critiques are justified, but do not destroy the basic insight of Theissen's masterly synthesis.

23 . Ibid.

not by the local communities of the sympathizers who lived less radical lives within the normal structures of Judaism.

It is certainly true that the sayings of Jesus, calling for the renunciation of family and of possessions (the two main sources of security in the ancient world), were followed literally only by the close disciples who accompanied him on his preaching tours through Palestine; and, after his death, by the wandering charismatics who were largely responsible for the spread and maintenance of early Christianity. But it would be wrong to limit their relevance to these groups alone. [24] The sayings are addressed to all the followers of Jesus. For they do not merely prescribe concrete actions ('sell all you have') which could be practised only by radical, elite followers, but they exemplify basic attitudes of freedom which are relevant to all. The story of the Rich Young Man in Mark's gospel, as the commentary added to it shows, is not meant to be a merely reminder of the concrete instructions on discipleship that Jesus once gave, but an illustration of the kind of anti-greed attitude every reader of the gospel, that is, every follower of Jesus must have.

This attitude of anti-greed derives from and is constituted by three basic gospel insights:

(a) It is, firstly, an expression of Jesus' recognition (which he shares with founders of other religions) that riches are dangerous. This is brought out powerfully in the dialogue between Jesus and his disciples (10:23-27), which immediately follows the story of the rich young man, and serves as an explanatory comment on it. [25] The dialogue is concentric, and centres on the striking aphorism of Jesus, surely one of the most memorable of his sayings, that it is easier for a camel (the largest animal Jesus knows) to go through the eye of a needle (the smallest opening known to him) than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

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24. So too Schmeller (n. 22) 105, who argues that after Easter all the sayings of Jesus, even the most radical were given a new meaning that was relevant and binding on all Christians.

25. See George Soares-Prabhu "Good News to the Poor': The Social Implications of the Message of Jesus", in D.S. Amalorpavadass (ed)., *The Indian Church in the Struggle for a New Society*. Bangalore: NBCLC, pp. 609-26 [611-13] for a somewhat more detailed analysis of the text.

Mk 10:23-27

V.23 A And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How *hard it will be for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!*"

V.24 B And the disciples were *amazed* at his words.

    A But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how *hard* it is to *enter the kingdom of God*!

V.25 **C It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God".**

V.26 B The disciples were *even more amazed*, and said to each other, "Then who can be saved?"

V.27 A Jesus looked at them and said, "For humans it is *impossible*, but not for God; all things are possible for God".

The consternation that this flat assertion of the opposition between 'having riches' and 'entering the Kingdom of God' causes among the disciples (V.24; V.26), and Jesus' repeated, uncompromising, and indeed increasingly emphatic insistence on it (what is 'hard' in V.23 becomes 'impossible' in V.25 and V.27), shows us that the anti-greed attitude Jesus advocates is not a counsel of perfection addressed by Jesus to an elite group of his disciples (the wandering charismatics of the early church or the Roman Catholic 'religious' today), but is an essential dimension of Christian discipleship itself. This becomes even clearer when we look at the second component of this attitude.

b) For the anti-greed attitude which Jesus requires is, secondly, also an expression of trust in the unique goodness of God, to which Jesus refers in the very first words he speaks in the story:"No one is good except God alone" (10:17). This unique goodness of God is the unspoken presupposition of the whole story.[26] For the kind of renunciation which Jesus demands can make sense only to those who have learned to trust in the goodness of God so absolutely, that they can go out on a mission taking with them "nothing for the journey except a staff - no bread, no bag, no money in (their) belts" (Mk 6:8); and who have stopped worrying about food, drink or clothing, so completely that they are as care-free as the birds of the air - not because they have (like `poor' religious today) inexhaustible resources at their disposal, but because they are confident that God ,their heavenly Parent, knows that they need these things and will take care of their need (Mt 6:31).

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26 So too Drewermann (n. 14 above) 121—22.

c) Finally, such an anti-greed attitude is nourished by a concern for the poor. "Go, sell everything you have", Jesus tells the rich young man "and give to the poor"(V.21). This expresses Jesus' own option for the poor, so conspicuous in his life and teaching. For his life, we know, was lived out in a progressive identification with the needy and the outcast - an ongoing journey from the centre to the periphery, as Kosuke Koyama described it, which did not end until it reached the ultimate boundary of the Cross - beyond which no further movement was possible, for Jesus was here totally outcast and wholly poor;[27] and his teaching was a consistent proclamation of the `privilege of the poor', to whom alone the good news is proclaimed (Mt 11:5; Lk 4:18) and God's rule promised (Lk 6:20). But Jesus' instruction to sell all and give to the poor says more than this. Besides defining the option of Jesus, it also spells out the economy of the God's rule. Its sell/give reminds us of the buy/give that structures the story of the multiplication of the loaves in Mk 6:35-44. "Send the people away", the disciples advise Jesus " so that *they can go and buy* themselves something to eat"(V.36). "*You give* them something to eat", replies Jesus (V.37), replacing the consumer economy of the market with the anti-greed economy of sharing.[28]

Freedom from attachment to things, trust in the unique goodness of God, and an effective concern for the poor are thus constituent elements in the anti-greed attitude which is implicit in Jesus' invitation to the rich young man. All three emerge from the foundational Christian experience of God as Parent, which Jesus communicates to those who follow him (Mt 11:25-27), and which becomes the basis of their Christian existence. The basic anti-greed attitude which they generate is therefore mandatory for every Christian. The attitude may find expression in various ways today, as it did in early Christianity where it showed itself in a radical renunciation of possessions among the wandering charismatics; in unostentatious almsgiving (Mt 6:2-4), or a sharing of goods with needy members of the community (Acts 4:32), among the groups of local sympathizers. But in no case can a follower of Jesus dispense with this attitude, and pretend that Jesus' invitation to the rich young man has nothing to say to her or to him.

27. Kosuke Koyama, "Hallowed be Your Name", *International Review of Mission* 49 (1980/81) 280-82.
28. Belo (n. 17 above) 159.

There is an in-built opposition in Christian discipleship to consumer-
ism, to conspicuous consumption, to the satisfaction of our unbridled
wants at the cost of the needs of others, to hoarding our possessions
for ourselves instead of sharing them with those in need. Even more
than the tribal ethos the Christian ethos is an ethos of anti-greed.
However much they would like to do it,, the followers of Jesus cannot
serve both God and mammon (Mt 6:24).-

B- Anti-Pride:
The Ambitious Request of the Sons of Zebedee
(10:35-45)
Mk 10:35-45

V.35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him and
said:

"Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you".

V.36 And he said to them,
"What do you want me to do for you?"

V.37 And they said to him,
"Let one of us sit at your right hand, and the other at your left, in
your glory."

V.38 But Jesus said to them,
"You do not know what you are asking.
Can you drink the cup that I drink,or to be baptized with the
baptism with which I am baptized?"

V.39 And they said to him, "We can".
and Jesus said to them,
"The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with
which I am baptized, you will be baptized;

V.40 But to sit at my right hand or at my left is not for me to grant; the
places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

V. 41 And when the ten heard it, they became indignant with James
and John.

V.42 Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those
who are regarded as rulers of the gentiles wield lordship over
them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

V.43 But it shall not be so with you.
Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your
servant,

V.44   and whoever wants to be first among you must be slave of all.

V.45   For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The story of the Rich Young Man (10: 17-27), which brings out the negative moment of Christian discipleship (not serving mammon), is balanced in Mark 10 by a second story, the Request of the Sons of Zebedee (10:35-45), which offers Jesus an occasion to speak about its positive moment (what it means to serve God). The anti-greed attitude taught by the first text is completed by the anti-pride attitude taught in the second.

Both these passages of the gospel have a similar basic story/ instruction pattern. The story of an encounter between Jesus and someone who comes to him with a request (10:17-23 and 10:35-40) becomes the occasion for instructions to the disciples on basic attitudes of discipleship (10:23-27 and 10:40-45). But the instructions of Jesus are linked to the introductory story more closely in the first passage than in the second. The lesson on the danger of riches (vv.23-27), attached to the first story (vv. 17-23) is introduced by Jesus himself. His comment (v. 23) breaks into the painful silence that follows the sad departure of this 'failed vocation', and draws an obvious lesson from his failure.. But the teaching on service (vv. 41-45) added to the second story (vv. 35-40) does not follow immediately upon the request of the Sons of Zebedee. It is occasioned by the reaction of the other disciples to their request (v. 41). This introduces what might seem to be a new topic, but is not really so. For the two parts of the episode (vv 35-40 and 41-45) are closely linked. The indignation of the disciples (v. 41) in the second part is, after all, occasioned by the ambition of the sons of Zebedee (v. 37) in the first; and the lesson Jesus gives to the ten on service (vv. 42-45) is very closely linked to what he has told the sons of Zebedee about his martyrdom and theirs (vv.38-39). Because the Son of Man, comes not to be served but to serve, his coming reaches its fulfilment in the laying down of his life as a ransom for many (v.45). Service is fulfilled by martyrdom. The two themes of the episode are thus drawn together in the concluding saying of Jesus, which expresses, as possibly no other saying in the gospels does, the essence of the *dharma* of Jesus which is also that of his disciples.

Still, the two parts of the passage, however closely joined,[29] do treat of two different themes. The request of the sons of Zebedee leads Jesus to speak of martyrdom, as his way to 'glory'; the indignation of the other disciples at their request leads to an instruction on the service as the basic attitude of discipleship. It is this second section that I shall focus on, because it is here we best find the gospel version of the tribal value of anti-pride that we are exploring here.

The section begins (v.41) by describing the indignation of the ten disciples at the request made by the sons of Zebedee that they be given places of Honour in the messianic Kingdom, which, they believe, is soon to be established, because Jesus is already on his way to Jerusalem (vv. 35-37). The indignation of the ten disciples would seem to be unwarranted, since Jesus has in fact refused the sons of Zebedee their request (v.40) - after having elicited from them their readiness to follow him in martyrdom (vv. 38-39), and having predicted that they would in fact do so (v.39).[30] But such niceties of narrative logic would not have bothered Mark or his readers. What interests them is how Jesus reacts to the crisis caused by the request of James and John, and to the currents of ambition simmering in the group of his disciples, that this crisis reveals. For the indignation of the ten at the self-serving request of the two brothers is, clearly, an indication of their own undisclosed ambition. They are angry that the sons of Zebedee should have foreclosed an honour that could have been claimed by others among them.

Jesus replies by explicitly contrasting the attitude towards the exercise of power which his disciples must have, with that which is found among earthly rulers; and by proposing his own life as a model for them. His discourse moves from "the rulers of the gentiles" (v. 42), to "you" (v.43) and then on to "the Son of Man" (v. 45). Earthly rulers "wield lordship" *(katakyrieuousin)* and "exercise authority" *(katexousiazousin)* over their subjects. That is, they dominate and exploit them to their own advantage.[31] This is not how the followers

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29 Note the literary links binding the first part of the passage (vv. 35-40) with the second (vv.41-45): *we wish* in v.35 and *whoever wishes in* v.44; *you do not know* in v. 38 and *you know* in v.42

30 This prediction, probably a *vaticinium ex eventu*, might conflict with the tradition in Jn 21: 23, if the Johannine 'beloved disciple' is identified with the younger Zebedee. But this identification is by no means certain — cf. Pesch (n. 16 above) 159-60; Gnilka (n. 15 above) 102-103.

31 Werner Foerster, *TDNT* II, p. 575; III, p. 1098

of Jesus must behave: "It shall *not* be so among you". Nothing could be more forceful than this flat, unadorned yet emphatic prohibition. The exercise of authority among his followers, Jesus says, cannot be like the dominating and exploitative lordship of the rulers of the earth, any more than their attitude to money can be like that of the worshippers of mammon. Once again, then, the followers of Jesus are faced with a choice. Just as they must choose between God and mammon (`you *cannot* serve God and mammon'), they must also choose, as Drewermann has put it, between Christ and Barabbas (Mk 15, 11)[32]- that is, between the way of God's rule and the way of earthly kings ("but it shall *not* be with you"). They must renounce, that is, not only the way of greed but the way of pride as well.

The reason Jesus gives for this is the example of his own life. He, the Son of Man, has come not be served but to serve. To be a servant (*diakonos*), then is the highest ambition a follower of Jesus can have. Such an attitude stands in direct opposition to the attitudes of "wielding lordship" (*katakyrieuein*) and "exercising authority" (*katexousiazein*) shown by the rulers of the earth; and is completely congruent with the life-pattern of Jesus who has come not to be served (*diakonethenai*) but to serve (*diakonesai*), and to lay down his life as a ransom for many". The followers of Jesus are called away from the pride of the `rulers of the gentiles' to the anti-pride of Jesus, understood not as self-abasement but as fearless and active service.[33]

Three observations can be made about this attitude of anti-pride or service (*diakonia*) to which Jesus summons his followers:

a) The self-definition which Jesus gives us of his life and his mission, shows us what this attitude really means. To serve is not simply to do something helpful for others. It is to develop a standing attitude of radical self giving, which will determine the shape of one's life. To serve is to lay down one's life, the way Jesus laid down his life not just at Calvary but all along his 'way' to the Cross, in ceaseless actions of self-giving love.

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32. Drewermann (n.14 above), 147.
33. Compare the parallel in Mt 23: 11 -12: "The greatest among you will be your servant. (*diakonos*); for whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself (*tapeinosei*) will be exalted." To "humble oneself" is thus equivalent to becoming a servant. The much misunderstood `humility' demanded by Jesus is not putting oneself down, but placing one's acknowledged gifts at the service of others.

b) Serving therefore means sharing: sharing not only of what one has (this is only the first small step), but of what one is. The anti-pride to which Jesus summons his followers is thus the fulfilment of their anti-greed. Sharing of possessions leads to a sharing of self. The 'way' of Jesus leads us, therefore, from what Erich Fromm has called the mode of 'having' to the mode of 'being' - where 'having' and 'being' refer to "two fundamental modes of existence, to two different kinds of orientation towards self and the world, to two different kinds of character structure, the predominance of which determines the totality of a person's thinking, feeling, and acting."[34] The rich young man, and the rulers of the gentiles live in the having-mode. For them to be is to have; that is, to possess things or control people. The more they have the more they believe they 'are'. Jesus invites his followers into a wholly different perception of things. He calls them to a counter-culture, in which to be is to love. One becomes more real and more alive to the extent one gives away all that one 'has' (not just one's material possessions but one's status, one's achievements, one's carefully constructed images of oneself as well), and risks living wholly out of the assurance of God's love.

c) Such dispositions of anti-greed and anti-pride are taught by Jesus not just as individual attitudes but as societal norms. Jesus was not concerned merely with the conversion of individuals, as New Testament scholarship till recently has consistently and wrongly taught, but with the transformation of society.[35] "The subject supposed by Jesus' ethical teaching", as Ben Wiebe puts it, "..contrary to Weiss, Harnack, Schweitzer, Bultmann, Perrin and countless others, is not [primarily] the isolated individual person. It is restored Israel a community of disciples."[36] For as his election of the Twelve disciples to symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel shows, the aim of Jesus was not leading individuals to `heaven' (saving souls!), but the eschatological restoration of Israel, as a step towards the apocalyptic restoration of humankind.

Anti-greed and anti-pride are therefore not just individual virtues which Jesus demanded from those who wished to follow him. They are

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34. Erich Fromm. *To Have or to Be?* London: Abacus, 1979, p.33
35. Cf. Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and Community: The Social dimension of Christian Faith*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984, p. 1-5; Ben Wiebe, "Messianic Ethics: Response to the Kingdom of God", *Interpretation* 45 (1991) 29-42.
36. Wiebe (n. 35 above) 30-31.

the structuring principles of the alternative community he sought to build. They are, therefore, meant to be community values. They are to be realized not just in individuals who strive to be 'poor' (Lk 6:20) and 'humble' (Mt 5:3; 11:28) in the sense that has been explained above, but in the life style and functioning of the community as a whole. It is the whole church (and not just a Mother Theresa in it) that must display conspicuously the tribal values of anti-greed and anti-pride as taught and lived out by Jesus. That is, it must demonstrate its poverty and its humility (its serviceability), as well as its option for the humble and the poor, in its transactions within the community (bishop-priest; priest-laity; men-women; rich-poor, clean caste-dalit), as well as in its uncompromising prophetic stance towards the huge, immensely greedy, power-hungry, and status-conscious world outside. It is such anti-greed and anti-pride that are the true marks of the church of Christ. For it is just these that make the church the contrast community (the light of the world and the salt of the earth) that Jesus intended his community to be.

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The Dancing Shepherds
Retelling the Christmas Story in a Tribal Idiom

To translate a text is to transpose it from one cultural context to another. The author of this article attempts a translation of the story of the shepherds in the infancy narrative of Luke (Lk. 2:8-20) into the idiom of the Warlis, an agrarian tribe living in the Thane district of Maharashtra. To be faithful to the Warli context which he has made his own the author is not satisfied with retelling the story literally, but attempts to transpose it into the idiom which will evoke in the Warli hearers the same experience the original story evoked in the readers of Luke. An analysis of the story to find out the experience it evoked is followed by its Warli retelling.

This article is an attempt to retell part of the Lucan Christmas story, the story of the annunciation of the birth of Jesus to shepherds (Lk 2:8-20) in the Warli context. The Warlis are an agrarian tribe inhabiting the Thane district, north of Bombay, and some parts of Gujarat. As an agrarian society, they are still very dependent on the natural cycle of the seasons. Their experience of the earth as their mother is based on the cyclic process of abundant life during the rains, of barrenness and death during the dry months and new life with the next rains. This experience of life is relived in their dance; the circle of dancers surges forward with a burst of life, and then at the signal of the drummer retraces its steps to a slower rhythm. But the Warlis are not an isolated tribe; their proximity to Bombay, with its effects like industrialization, efforestation, modernization... etc., cuts right through the circle of their lives, and yet the dance goes on!

My first encounter with the Warlis was as a Standard X student, during a vocation camp at the Jesuit mission at Talasari. Over the years - many camps at Talasari and a year of teaching there during

my'regency' - what began as an infatuation with their rustic life style has developed into a feeling of kinship. I am not a Warli, and cannot presume to translate biblical narratives for the Warlis. What I am attempting here is to translate a biblical narrative into a context which is now part of my own world.

A translation of a biblical text into non-literate culture like that of the Warlis is not simply a matter of finding linguistic equivalents, whether literal or dynámic. Ideally the translation should be the re-birth of the text into a new form, appropriate to the communication styles of the receptor culture, which will evoke the experience the text intends to communicate. That is why my retelling of the Lucan story takes the form of a song, which ideally would have accompained an appropriate dance.

My article, then has two parts. The first is a summary structural analysis of Lk 2:28-20 which attempts to find out what the evangelist wanted to say, or better, given the story character of the text, to discover the experience he wished to evoke. The second part is re-telling of the story in the form of a song which might evoke this experience in a Warli world. Songs (like stories) have of course inexhaustible sources of meaning. The notes I give suggest some such meanings; they are not intended to be exhaustive.

Part I: The Lucan Story

The narrative of the Shepherds in Luke appears to be composed of two acts, which I have called cycles A1 and A2 , which together form the larger cycle A embracing the whole narrative. The two cycles are located in two different contexts, C1 and C2, and are framed in 3 refrains, R1, R2, R3. I give this structural scheme below and then use it to present the complete text of the story.
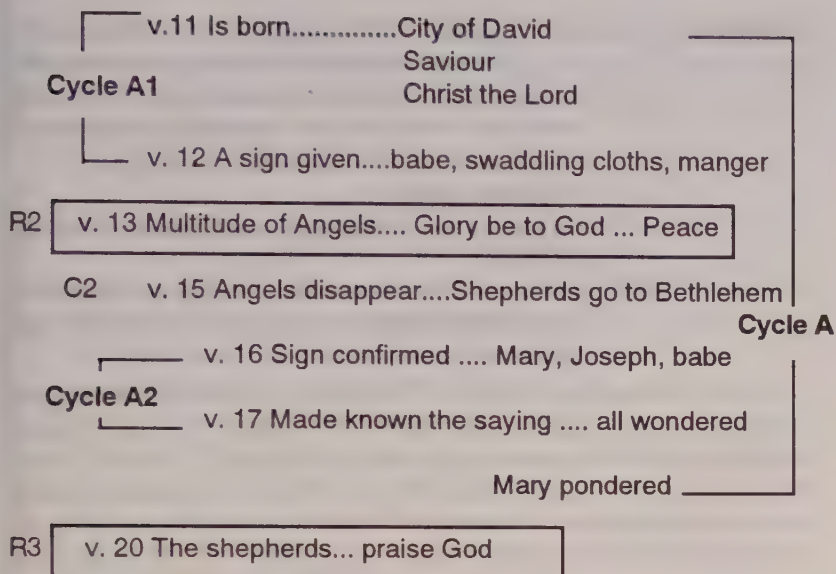
The Structural Frame of Lk 2:8-20

C1   v.8 Shepherds watching their sheep

R1	v. 9 An angel appears...........Glory of God.........Fear
	v. 10 Angel said ....---------------........Do not be afraid
	I bring you.........Good News.........All the people

> v.11 Is born..............City of David
> Saviour
> **Cycle A1**   Christic the Lord

> v. 12 A sign given....babe, swaddling cloths, manger

R2 | v. 13 Multitude of Angels.... Glory be to God ... Peace |

   C2   v. 15 Angels disappear....Shepherds go to Bethlehem

Cycle A

> v. 16 Sign confirmed .... Mary, Joseph, babe
> **Cycle A2**
> v. 17 Made known the saying .... all wondered

Mary pondered

R3 | v. 20 The shepherds... praise God |

Lk 2:8-20: the Structured Text

C1 v.8 And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

R1 v.9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

v.10 And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people;

Cycle A1 v.11 for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

v.12. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger".

R2 v.13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

v.14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

C2 v.15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us".

Cycle A2.   v. 16 And they went with haste, and found Mary and
                        Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

            v.17 And when they saw it they made known the saying
                  which had been told them concerning this child;

            v.18 and all who heard it wondered at what the
                  shepherds told them.

            v.19. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in
                  her heart.

R3.   v.20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising
                  God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been
                  told them.

From the structure of cycle A1, A2 and A, it seems clear that the prophecy, v.11 lies at the very heart of the narrative. A child is born, yes, but Luke is doing more than merely describing the birth of a child. He is giving us the identity of the child. The child appears to be of universal significance. There appears to be a process of universalization as indicated by the three titles used: "City of David", Judaic and parochial to the universal "Lord". The process of universalization is further strengthened by the mention of "all" on two other occasions — The narrative names Mary, Joseph, the babe and the shepherds, so who are the "all" that "wondered" in v.18? V. 10 is more explicit — the prophecy of salvation is clear for "all people".

How will "all people" recognize their salvation when it comes? The babe in swaddling cloths in a manger is too ordinary and everyday to be a sign. If ever there was a sign that this was to be a major event, then the angelophany was indeed a truly impressive sign. Then why the manger? I am inclined to think, precisely because it was ordinary. The interpretations of Baily and Giblin[1] certainly add meaning to the "manger", but they do not seem to be Luke's primary intention. Luke is setting the stage, right at the very start, for the paradox of Christian revelation—Christ is the Lord of All creation, and this will be manifested precisely, in the little ordinary things of everyday life. In the Old Testament, God had revealed himself through works of might and power. But now, he has come to stay with us, as we are.

In the three refrains, Luke seems to develop a progression of Praise motiff—— a single angel in vv 9-10, a multitude of angels in v. 13, and all humanity, in the shepherds, take up the hymn in v. 20. The similar structure of the refrains (angel...glory...fear, angel...glory...peace) is too close to be a mere coincidence.

In summary then, Luke's intention can be put into three points:
Jesus is the Lord. His Lordship is revealed to us through the simple
ordinary things of everyday life. All humanity is called to acknowledge
his Lordship.

Part II. The Retelling

"Come my little ones, day has dawned,
Take the cattle to the hills.[2]
Gone are the days of dried leaves,[3]
Barren hills scorched by his glare:
While you slept "Pavsha"[4] smiled.
See,[5] the earth breaks forth with joy,
Tender shoots dancing on the hill,
Hurry, the cattle call!

Merrily the cattle wound their way
Down narrow paths stopping
To talk to tender shoots.
The little girls with gay abandon,[6]
Singing and playing as they followed:
And deep in her heart Mary felt
The stirrings of new life.
"Truly the Mother[7] of Life is here to stay,
And this shall be a sign:
The young woman will conceive and bear a child,
And they shall place it in a "joli"[8]
The "suini"[9] sings, "Do not be afraid,
Work hard, eat, care for life and grow."

Trucks with logs rumble past,
Across the road[10] the factory hooter beckons.
Leaving the cattle on the hill
The girls rushed off to where,
The dancers had gathered-[11]
And the Dance goes on!

Notes

1. Baily, M. "The Shepherds and the sign of a Child in the Manger" ITQ, 31 (1964) 1-23.
   Giblin, C.H "Reflections on the Sign of the Manger" CBQ 29 (1967) 87.101.
   cfr. George Soares- Prabhu sj. "Preaching at Christmas and Easter", JDV.
2. A Warli takes the cattle into the house with him at night. With the first light they are let out. During the monsoons, when crops are in the fields, little girls take the cattle to the hills to graze. Boys go to school. The dawning of day could refer to the actual dawn or to the Kairrological moment - the day of salvation that is at hand.
3. During the summer the Warli collects dried leaves and dung from the forest, which he spreads over patches of his field and burns - "Rab"
4. "Pavsha" is the rain god.
5. "See", elsewhere "listen","talk to tender shoots"- an oral activity, probably eating- a certain sense perception of the divine mystery, as opposed to abstract revelation.
6. "gay abandon" as opposed to the responsibility of Mary's vocation.
7. "Mother"— The Earth Mother refered to as "Dhartari". As opposed to "Father"
8. "Joli"— The birth ceremony on the third/fourth day after birth. The placing of the child in the "joli" (cloth cradle) is a symbol of acceptance into the Warli community. The child is now entrusted to its parents. Till this time its "jiva" belonged to the world of the spirits.
9. "suini"—midwife who helps deliver the child. She looks after the child till the "joli" is performed. "Do not be afraid..." are part of six commandments given to the child at the "joli" ceremony.
10 "road" — refers to the Bombay- Ahmedabad highway. At Palghar, Boisar, Dahanu, Aachad, we have tracts of land being developed by the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (M.I.D.C). Across the border we have similar industrial areas being developed by the G.I.D.C.
11. "gathered"- As the sound of the drum carries over the hills and field, the Warlis leave their little homes and go to where the dancers have started to gather. It is as if the drum "calls- out" of life's daily activities, an "ekklesia".
   · Perhaps we have to explore the Dance as an Ecclesiological model for the tribal church.

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Book Reviews

Xavier Kidangean, *Family and Priesthood in the Syro-Malabar Church,* Vadavathoor, Kottayam: OIRS, 1993, pp.xxii, 265. Rs.120

The book is about the family background of vocation to the priesthood and priestly formation in the Syro-Malabar Church. It is the outcome of a study and research, originally submitted as a doctoral dissertation to the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, Rome.

The first three chapters of the book study the family background of the Syro-Malabarians as a synthesis of the Indian family tradition and the Christian faith, while the last two concentrate on priestly vocation and priestly formation. In the encounter between Christianity brought by St. Thomas the Apostle and Hinduism, Christians are said to have absorbed and assimilated all the good elements of Indian culture into their social and religious life, thus effecting a concrete expression of their faith in an Oriental and Indian life-style, though this has been considerably influenced later by the European culture. The second chapter concentrates on the evolution of the Christian family in the multi-religious context of India, particularly the Hindu conception of life in four stages of studentship, householder, the hermit and the sannyasa. The Christian formation in the family by the Syro-Malabarians is the topic of the third chapter. Besides the family there are a number of mediatory agencies like the parish church, the christian school and the various pious associations that help the formation of the individual.

What strengthens the family is the *kudumbayoga* or extended family reunion, which discusses all topics relevant to the family life, including liturgical participation, education and particularly the catechetical instruction of children, family problems, assistance to poor families and caring for the sick and elderly. What is important is that the leadership of the laity should be strengthened. "Conscientization among the laity and genuine effort on the part of the clergy and hierarchy can contribute much to the formation of lay people" (p. 121)

The fourth chapter explores the role of the family in fostering priestly vocation especially in the light of the present abundance of

vocation in the Syro-Malabar Church. The spiritual ethos of the family and the truly Christian life of the parents are the main contributing factors to fostering priestly vocation. The whole parish family has a supportive role in presenting priestly life as a noble goal for young people.

The main contribution of the book is its detailed analysis of priestly formation, which is the main topic of the fifth chapter. After examining the ancient Hindu style of education it explains the pre-Portughese method of priestly formation in Malpanates, with the controlling role of the parish yogams in choosing and sustaining the candidates. The second part of this chapter describes the formation now being imparted in the three major seminaries of the Syro Malabar Church and goes into detail regarding the various elements that should be stressed in effective priestly formation. The author particularly emphasizes the need for contextualizing of formation, which "implies a need for learning and teaching in a concrete situation and amidst the people", and a "task-oriented programme for the formation of priests in the Syro-Malabar Church" (p. 193). The priest should be trained to be a leader of the people, who "must have initiative, drive, organizing ability and the capacity to inspire confidence in others and bring out the best in them" (p. 195). Formation for prayer life is as important as formation for practical ministry as well as the theoretical training in psychology, anthropology, sociology, philosophy and theology.

Another important element in priestly formation emphasized by Kidangan is training in missionary consciousness. There is need for a new thrust towards evangelization, and with regard to the Syro-Malabar Church "the outgoing number of newly ordained priests from the three major seminaries is more than two hundred every year and many of them are posted in the mission in India and elsewhere. Thus a missionary oriented formation has advantages for the work of evangelization of the Church "(pp. 203-4). The book has good many positive suggestions to improve priestly formation mostly on traditional lines. One could, perhaps, expect something more from the author in the way of suggestions for making priesthood itself more challenging and relevant for the twentyfirst century especially in our multireligious Indian society.

John B. Chethimattam

Swami Dharma Theertha, *History of Hindu Imperialism* Pub. by Dalit Ed. Literature Centure; P.B. No. 2296, Madras-23: 1941 & 1992, pages 10 + 280. Price Rs. 100.

In Societies where historical research goes on at high speed as in India today, history-related books get out of date very quickly. This is one such case where the references given as secondary material are at least as old as half a century - Sewell for Vijaynagar and Havel for Aryan rule. C.V. Vaidya, R.K. Mookherji. R.C. Dutt and Tod are the last words in some other topics dealt with here. The book is a long tirade against Brahmins and Brahmanism. Caste and Brahmin domination are identified as the villains in Indian History.

It is bad history in the sense that terms are employed in a loose manner to suit the whims of the writer. Thus 'nationalism', which is a modern phenomenon, is described as a major trend of the era of early Buddhism.This is quite anachronistic and violates the first principles of historical method. There is also continuous mix up between myths and history since the Puranic stories are treated as historical and their characters are used to narrate the social events and attitudes.

Most historians agree today that Brahmin priests, landlords and courtiers had a big role to play as exploiters of the people in India. But it is also recognised that their strength was derived from the apathy and ignorance of others. The Brahmins were the founders and creators of much that is good in Indian culture - the great Sanskrit works in philosophy and literature, temple arts and systems of law. At the same time they were also responsible for inequality and injustice built into social structure through the caste system. Under their leadership irrational ideas were circulated to keep the common people in bondage. Their clannishness and arrogance prevented the growth of patriotism and united resistance to intruders became impossible. However, the cult of anti-Brahmanism serves no creative purpose. It is as damaging as the glorification of the snobbish Brahmin. This over-enthusiasm combined with lack of proper historical understanding at the ground level of facts has turned the work into mere polemical literature. It is not the passion of the political platform but the careful analysis of what happened in the past that will create the true foundation of history and contribute to the application of the lessons of history to the problems of the present and the future.

In the absence of objective and dispassionate approach to the past, this book will bring more evil than good. By dividing the people

of India into Brahmins and non-Brahmins and condemning Brahmani -sm in to to as imperialism, the author has wasted his courage and independence.His work will only serve those who intend to sabotage Indian Society and culture.

M.G.S. Narayanan

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Statement about Ownership and other Particulars about **Jeevadhara**
(Form V - see Rule 8)